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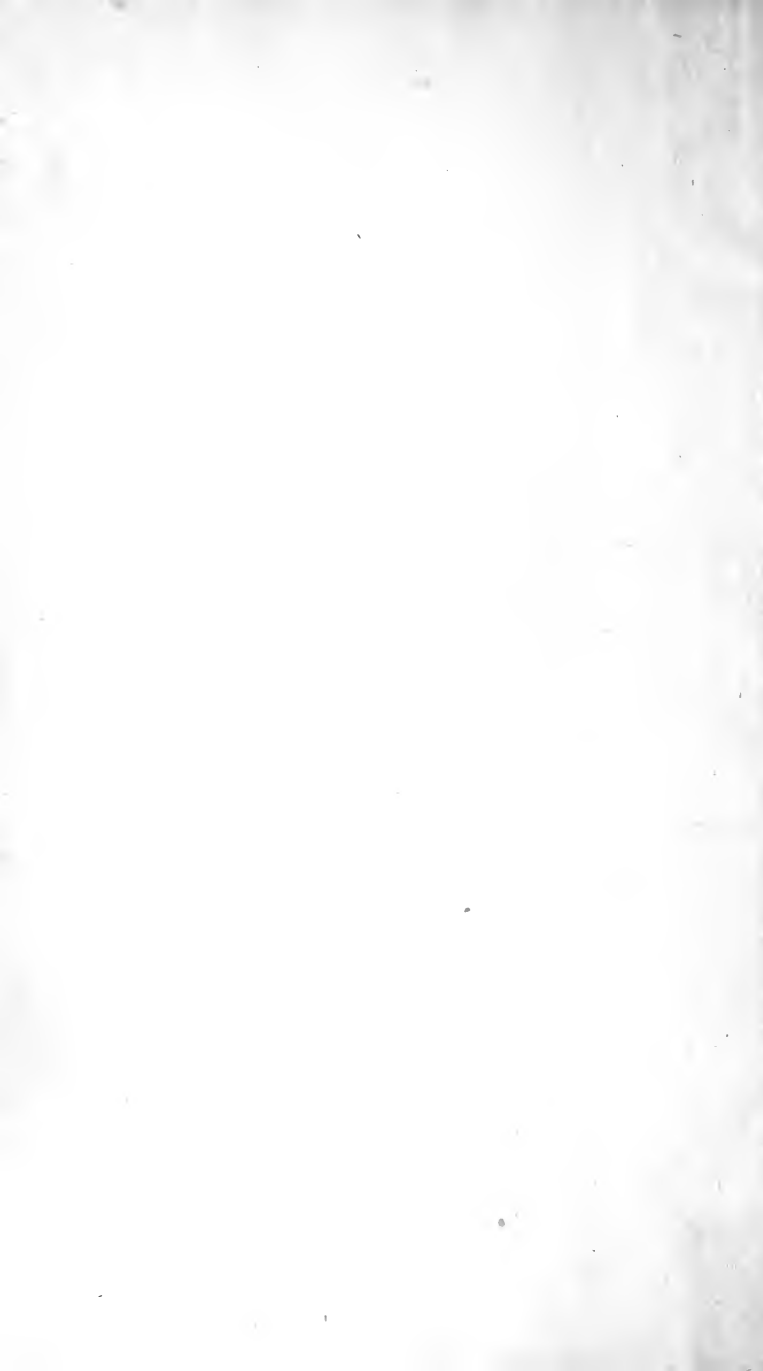
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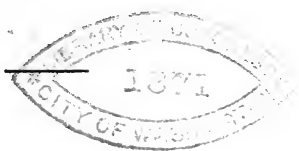
PLEA FOR THE HEATHEN:

OR,

HEATHENISM

ANCIENT AND MODERN.

WRITTEN FOR THE MASSACHUSETTS SABBATH SCHOOL
SOCIETY, AND REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE
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CONTENTS.



INTRODUCTION. Importance of a correct knowledge of the condition of the Heathen,	5
CHAPTER I.	
Heathenism in Old Testament times,	15
CHAPTER II.	
Heathenism in New Testament times,	26
CHAPTER III.	
Modern Heathenism,	38
CHAPTER IV.	
Idolatry of the Heathen,	43
CHAPTER V.	
Vices of the Heathen,	49
CHAPTER VI.	
Cruelties of the Heathen,	66
CHAPTER VII.	
Heathen ideas of justice,	87
CHAPTER VIII.	
State of Domestic Society among the Heathen, . . .	95

CHAPTER IX.

Condition and treatment of Females in Heathen countries,	106
--	-----

CHAPTER X.

Heathen ideas of a Future State,	118
--	-----

CHAPTER XI.

Prospects of the Heathen for Eternity,	127
--	-----

CHAPTER XII.

Influence of the Gospel on the condition of the Heathen,	142
--	-----

CHAPTER XIII.

Objections to sending the Gospel to the Heathen considered,	164
---	-----

CHAPTER XIV.

Motives for sending the Gospel to the Heathen, . . .	177
--	-----

CHAPTER XV.

Concluding Remarks,	190
-------------------------------	-----

PREFACE.

THE writer of this little volume prepared it to fill a place not now filled by any Sabbath school book with which he is acquainted. An earnest desire to interest the rising generation in the great work of the world's conversion has been his motive. None but well authenticated facts have been presented.

It is now commended to the serious and attentive perusal of the young, in the hope, that it may not be without some influence in promoting among them that spirit of benevolence, which seeks the universal prevalence of holiness and happiness, a result inseparably connected with the whole earth's subjection to Christ.

H. B. H.

Berkshire Co. Mass. November, 1832.



INTRODUCTION.

Importance of a correct knowledge of the condition of the Heathen.

A correct knowledge of the condition of the heathen is essential to earnest and persevering efforts for their welfare. The mere vague and general impression that the heathen are in an unhappy condition, is not enough to take strong hold upon the springs of human action. Those who see but little, will feel but little. And one great reason why the Christian world is not excited to an hundred fold greater ardor and zeal for the salvation of the heathen is, that their deplorable moral condition is not fully understood; a consequence of which is, it is not solemnly and prayerfully pondered. It cannot be questioned,

that a vast amount of moral energy, which has slumbered in inactivity, would have been aroused and successfully employed in behalf of the heathen, had their claims to pity and relief been better understood.

Such knowledge will powerfully excite benevolent feeling. It is impossible for the inhabitants of Christian lands to take a fair view of heathenism, and be unmoved. They can, and do, feel in view of scenes of misery before their eyes. And the melancholy picture presented by the darkness and depravity of paganism can be so presented as to awaken benevolent compassion. It was on this sad picture that those holy men gazed, who have gone to publish salvation among the heathen. And as they gazed they wept, they prayed, they resolved, they gave themselves to Christ, and to this great work, and are now carrying it on with zeal and success, though some have fallen asleep.

It will correct some prevalent mistakes in regard to their character and condition. In respect to their condition it has been often asserted and supposed they were happy, happier than the inhabitants of Christian lands, and therefore that they had no special need of our sympathy. In

respect to their character, it has been affirmed, that though ignorant and degraded, they were nevertheless harmless, inoffensive, and abounding in amiable qualities, and therefore in respect to eternity had nothing to fear. All this is an utter delusion, and correct knowledge on the subject will show that the dark places of the earth are full of cruelties and crimes of every odious hue, full of wretchedness and full of danger for the future.

It will throw light upon some important scriptural truths. It will afford the most convincing evidence of the great doctrine of human depravity. It will show how much a revelation from heaven was needed to enlighten the benighted minds of men, and how great the necessity that there should be a Mediator between God and men. How forcibly will it illustrate the importance of that great moral change, described as passing from darkness unto light, and from death to life ! How will it vindicate the apostles in their anxieties and toils to diffuse the gospel's sanctifying influence ; and vindicate the conduct of the blessed God, when he " pours out his fury upon the heathen," and reveals from heaven his wrath against their unrighteousness.

It will show the divine power of the gospel. Look on a heathen land. Behold the moral midnight! Its idolatry and superstition, its infamous rites and cruel customs, its innumerable and odious abominations present a heart-sickening picture. Look now upon a Christian land. Though the gospel has been far enough from exerting its full power, it has nevertheless poured all over that land a salutary influence; an influence felt in the institutions of civil government; in the various relations of social and domestic life; felt in the powerful restraint it imposes on human passions, those fountains of misery; felt above all in raising the polluted, sinful minds of men to the knowledge and enjoyment of God, to holiness of motives and affections, and to the blessed hope of eternal life in heaven.

Whence this difference? What Christian lands were once, may be seen by what heathen lands now are. But they are changed: a mighty energy has been employed to dispel darkness, to break the iron bondage of sin, and to raise the benighted and miserable, to light, peace, and salvation. That powerful engine has been the gospel.

It will show our obligations to be grateful for

the distinguished blessings we enjoy. The eye cannot long be fastened on the dark picture of heathen wretchedness, without being turned also upon the blessed contrast presented by Christian lands. The grand points of difference will rise up before the view, and there cannot but be, certainly upon the pious mind, a deep impression of the goodness of God. That goodness will shine still more gloriously in the contrast it has made between us and the pagan world. He who returns from the damps and darkness of a cavern to the noonday, enjoys as others do not, the pure atmosphere and the genial sun. So returning from contemplating the woes of paganism, we learn more highly to prize, and more thankfully to enjoy our infinitely superior blessings.

We can thus duly appreciate the motives of those who carry the gospel to the heathen. In the condition of the heathen is found every thing repulsive and forbidding to a mind enlightened by Christianity. Their debasing superstitions—their absurd and impure religious rites—their revolting cruelties—their disgusting habits and modes of life, all conspire to render a heathen land a most undesirable abode to

those accustomed to the superior comforts of Christian countries. What then leads the missionary to renounce the ties of home and friends and native land, and to surrender himself to the privations and perils of heathen shores? The cries of perishing millions had broken upon his ears. Their miseries for time and eternity utter an appeal "like the sound of many waters." He exclaims,

" Shall we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high,
Shall we, to men benighted,
The lamp of life deny?"

There is no enthusiasm in such a man, which the gospel does not require, which was not possessed by Paul and all his associates, which the momentous nature of his enterprise does not demand. He acts on principles which will bear the test of the great examination day. And a correct knowledge of the wretchedness of the heathen will justify all the strength of his compassion and all the ardor of his zeal.

We shall thus learn our own duty. "And who is my neighbor?" Luke, x. 29. "The wretched every where," is the spirit of the Saviour's reply to this inquiry. The miserable,

whom our kindness can reach and relieve, wherever they may be, are our neighbors. By carefully considering the moral state of the heathen, we shall see they have the strongest claim on our compassion. A heathen land presents a picture of debasement and wretchedness suited to move the pity of every enlightened mind. Their woes we can reach and can relieve by our kindness. A measure of their misery has been already relieved. Here and there a verdant spot has been redeemed from the wilderness. And by prosecuting the measures now employed, farther and wider still will the waters of salvation roll, till the whole wilderness shall blossom and every solitary place be glad. And what has been done shows that the work of blessing the world with the gospel may be successfully carried on. By learning the state of benighted nations, we learn their claims upon our compassion. We see that duty bids us send relief.

The above considerations show the importance of a correct knowledge of the present state of the heathen world. This knowledge is immensely important to every class of the Chris-

tian community, to all the friends of Zion and humanity.

But it is especially important to the youth of our country. No class of the human race are more highly favored. What a vast amount of sanctifying influence is now brought to bear upon them. How many pens are employed for their good. What a tide of holy influence does the press pour out upon them. How many labor with untiring diligence, in the business of their instruction. How many prayers for them are daily poured out before God. As the result of all this, great accessions have been made to Zion from their number. And so it will be. These efforts will be successful. And Zion's chief accessions, her glory and beauty and strength, will be drawn from the rising generation. Shortly those that now pity and pray and labor for the heathen, will have fallen asleep. Death will palsy the firm hand, quench the bright eye, stifle the ascending prayer. Many who have put forth a mighty energy in behalf of the heathen, have been recently removed. The active and efficient friends of the heathen now on the stage of life, will soon follow them. Who then will remain to shed the sympathizing

tear, make the generous offering, pour forth the ardent prayer ; who will remain to sustain and carry forward the present movement of Christian love ; if our youth are not trained to these all-important duties ?

To awaken compassion—to rouse a spirit of heartfelt and active benevolence, by directing the mind to the miseries of the heathen, has been the motive in preparing this little volume. The facts presented are drawn from the most authentic sources, and entire reliance may be placed on their correctness. And this view of the moral condition of the heathen world, is now presented to the reader, with the desire and hope, that having been read and seriously pondered, the solemn inquiry may be made, “ Lord, what wilt thou have ME to do ? ”

ANCIENT AND MODERN

HEATHENISM.

CHAPTER I.

Heathenism in Old Testament times.

THE first grand principle of true religion, the existence of one only living and true God, seems to have been communicated to our first parents, and through them diffused among the first population of the earth. Traces of a belief in one God, can be discovered among the most ancient nations. Though their ideas were confused, and mixed with a thousand absurdities, yet evidence is abundant that they believed there was but one great Creator and Governor of all.

But this grand doctrine began very early to be corrupted, and divine honors, denied the Creator, began to be bestowed upon the works

of his hands. The most ancient form of idolatry was the worship of the sun, moon, and stars. An ancient Greek writer says, "The most ancient people of Egypt, looking up to the world above them, and the nature of the universe, and being struck with astonishment and admiration, supposed the sun and moon to be the eternal and principal gods." The study of astrology, or the art of ascertaining future events from the movement of the heavenly bodies, was at the same time one of the consequences of this form of idolatry, and the means of extending and perpetuating it. The heavenly bodies were regarded as animated beings, and all the honors and attributes of God were ascribed to them. This kind of idolatry is called in the Scriptures the "worship of the host of heaven," (Deut. iv. 19.) and prevailed throughout the ancient world.

The next substitution in the place of the true God, was of departed men, heroes and others, who had been renowned for their deeds in this world, whether good or bad. They were regarded as gods, and received divine homage as such. Pillars were erected to their memory, festivals were observed, and statues were dedicated to them. The use of these representations

of deified heroes, was doubtless the commencement of worshipping things of human workmanship. Not only God himself, but the works of God must give place to the workmanship of men's hands. The use of images is the first form of idolatry distinctly noticed in the sacred records; Genesis, xxxi. 19.; xxxv. 2, 4; and is solemnly prohibited by the second commandment. Deut. v. 8. By a very easy transition these images, which were at first merely representations of the gods, became themselves the objects of worship, being supposed to be possessed of divine attributes. Exodus, xxxii. 4.

Afterward the various objects of nature were deified; as the elements, fire, water, the wind, the earth, and the ocean; various kinds of animals, as apes, bulls, serpents, and reptiles; and almost every kind of plant, even to leeks and onions. In a word, whatever a depraved fancy chose, was put in the place of God. Men worshipped almost every thing as God, but God himself. They were "mad upon their idols," and as if dissatisfied with one kind, flew to another, and soon abandoning that, ran the whole round of madness and folly. Thus "they changed the glory of the incorruptible God."

The principal heathen gods mentioned in the Old Testament, are Baal, Bel, Baalpeor, Beelzebub, Moloch, Remphan, Dagon, and Rimmon. These were representations of the human form, and were made usually of wood ; Isaiah, xlv. 20 ; also of gold, silver, brass, iron, and stone. Dan. v. 4.

The ancient idolaters supposed their deities were possessed of the various human infirmities and passions. 1 Kings, xviii. 27. They were supposed to sleep, to rest, to go on journies, to approach and partake of the sacrifices offered to them. Their deities were of both sexes, lived in matrimony, and were said to indulge in the basest passions of human nature. Altars were dedicated to them. Deut. vii. 5. Temples were erected for their worship, containing their statues. 1 Samuel, v. 2, 3. Groves were planted around them to conceal the infamous rites often practised. Deut. xii. 3 ; Isaiah, xvii. 8 ; 2 Kings, xxiii. 7. Priests and priestesses performed the services of these temples. 2 Kings, x. 19 ; xxiii. 20.

The ancient heathen sought the favor of their gods in various ways.

1. *By Sacrifices.* These were animals of

various kinds, incense, libations of wine, cakes, &c. The horrid practice of sacrificing human victims prevailed among all the ancient heathen nations. The Canaanites offered the most promising of their children to the gods. Levit. xx. 2—4. The deity to whom these sacrifices were most often made, was called Moloch. 2 Kings, xxiii. 10. This was a brazen idol, of great stature, and so constructed as to receive fire within; and in its arms, so fastened that they could not escape, vast numbers of miserable victims perished. Children were principally sacrificed. Levit. xviii. 21; 2 Kings, xxiii. 10. The valley of Hinnom, where one of these idols stood, means the “valley of shrieking,” in reference to the cries of the miserable victims of this horrid species of idolatry. This practice was not confined to peculiar emergencies, or imminent dangers only, but was performed constantly, and often on trivial occasions.

2. *By prayers*, repeated with innumerable senseless repetitions. Matt. vi. 7. “They doled them out, syllable by syllable, sometimes muttering in a low tone, and sometimes peeping like a chicken.” Isaiah, viii. 19. These acts

of worship were often accompanied with various modes of self-torture, such as tearing out the hair, cutting the flesh till the blood flowed profusely, casting themselves with violence upon the ground, &c. See 1 Kings, xviii. 26, 29.

3. *By festivals*, often scenes of the most disgusting riot and debauchery.

4. *By impure rites*. The most disgusting and often worse than brutal acts of tenderness, were regarded as acceptable to the gods, and were practised. 2 Kings, xxiii. 7. These revolting rites, this horrid compound of cruelty and blood, constituting as it every where did a part of heathen worship, accounts for the strong and indignant language of Scripture, “abominable idolatries.” 1 Peter, iv. 3.

The following are various heathen customs mentioned in the Old Testament.—*Divination*. This was the science of discovering what was hidden, whether interpreting of dreams, ascertaining future events, &c. and seems to be a term embracing what is implied in the various terms which follow. *Magic*, Exodus, vii. 11; Isaiah, xlvi. 13. *Necromancy*, Deut. xviii. 11. *Enchantments*, Levit. xix. 26. *Soothsaying*, Dan. ii. 27. *Sorcery*, Exodus, vii. 11. *Consul-*

tation with familiar spirits, 1 Sam. xxviii. 7.
Responses of oracles, Isaiah, xli. 21—24.

The ancient heathen had but dark and confused notions of a future state, where any belief of this existed at all. By many distinguished philosophers, future existence was denied altogether ; it being believed that the soul was material like the body, and perished with it. Some regarded it as falling into an eternal sleep. The most absurd and ridiculous fancies were indulged concerning the future state where it was believed. The transmigration of souls, or their passing into other bodies, was a general opinion. Retribution consisted in the different kinds of bodies into which the departed entered. The good entered the bodies of such men or beasts as they chose, and the bad were condemned to inhabit the bodies of the meaner animals and reptiles. Many maintained that the great and renowned in this world, were admitted at once into the society of the gods ; others who were less worthy would join them after a limited punishment, and the vile and abandoned were doomed to stripes and chains, to hunger and thirst, etc. forever in Hades, the place of departed spirits. But all was uncertainty and con-

jecture. One fanciful system respecting futurity was exchanged for another. Now these fancies prevailed, and now those. Change followed change in "endless mazes lost." The most deep and deplorable darkness overhung the future, and as it respects any correct notions concerning it, the ancient heathen "were without hope in the world."

The moral character of the heathen world at this period, was that of excessive corruption. They are represented, as we have already seen, as sunk in the most debasing superstition and idolatry. Psalms, xcvi. 5; 2 Kings, xvii. 33; Isaiah, lx. 2. As ambitious, rapacious, and cruel. Jer. li. 25; l. 29; Isaiah, xiv. 6, 17; xii. 18. As treacherous and deceitful, even to a proverb. Exodus, viii. 29. As given to excessive sensuality, being lewd and debauched, almost beyond credence. Isaiah, xxiii. 17; Gen. xix. 5. As dwelling, as it respects all correct moral principle, in the region and shadow of death. The nations principally noticed in the Old Testament, are Sodom and Gomorrah, Egypt, the kingdoms of Canaan, Ethiopia, Persia, Assyria, and Babylon. Nations more remote from Palestine, so far as can be learned, were in the

same deplorable moral condition. The history of all the nations of antiquity, is a most melancholy record of human depravity. Rulers gained their eminence in most cases, through the foulest treachery, and by rivers of blood. And the power thus gained was employed in gratifying the vilest human passions, no matter what the waste of human life, or the destruction of human happiness. Both sacred and profane historians unite in presenting us with a picture of the most excessive and deplorable corruptions.

I have thus given my readers a brief sketch of ancient heathenism. A more extended and particular examination would bring before our view a greater number and variety of its abominations. But the picture is already dark enough without the addition of another shade. Historical facts would warrant it, but my limits forbid. Before closing this topic, it may not be unimportant to look at the view given by the Old Testament of the criminality of heathenism.

1. In God's solemn warnings to his people against its pollution. These are scattered from one end to the other of that part of God's word. And they are given in a tone of vehemence and

earnestness,* sufficiently indicative of the feelings of him who gave them. "And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nations, which I cast out before you, for they committed all these things, therefore I *abhorred* them." Leviticus, xx. 23.

2. In the just indignation God declares heathen practices awakened in his mind. "The children gather wood, and the father's kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke me to anger. Behold mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, &c. and it shall burn, and none shall quench it." Jer. vii. 18, 20.

3. In the dreadful punishments inflicted on the heathen. The abominations of Sodom and the cities of the plain brought on them the burning vengeance of the Almighty. He sent his own people into a seventy year's most painful captivity, for following heathenish examples. He made Tyre like the "top of a rock," Ezek. xxvi. 14; and Babylon "a wilderness, a dry land, a desert;" for it was "a land of graven images, and they were mad upon their idols."

Jer. l. 38. The Almighty in his judgments upon these nations, expressly mentions their idolatry, pride, lust, &c. as the reasons for his conduct.

In no way more solemnly could God proclaim the criminality of heathenism, than he has done. His word, accompanied by the awful visitations of his providence, declares the heathen guilty. And if this were true concerning the nations encircling ancient Palestine, it could have been no less so of other nations. They were not guilty of fewer abominations. They were not less deserving of his judgments. The heart sickens at the necessary inference, that innumerable millions, comprising the ancient heathen world, have gone to the retributions of eternity, unfitted to meet them in safety.

CHAPTER II.

Heathenism in New Testament times.

THE last chapter embraced a period closing with the Old Testament history. The present one surveys heathenism from that period, about 420 years before Christ, to the close of the New Testament Scriptures, about the 100th year of the Christian era.

During this period there existed some of the most powerful and flourishing kingdoms known in the history of the world. There had been a great advance in human improvement, in civilization, in civil government, in the arts and sciences, and every department of learning. Monuments of genius and learning, the writings of poets, orators, philosophers, and historians, have come down to us, and will command admiration

in all future time. We have here, therefore, an opportunity of beholding heathenism under the favorable alliance of civilization, genius, and refinement.

With the single exception of one small kingdom, not larger than one of the smaller States of this Union, idolatry was spread over the whole face of the earth. The gods were innumerable. "It was easier to find a god than a man," says a Grecian writer. See, also, Acts, xvii. 16. As in more ancient days so now, every thing was deified but God himself. Every event, and almost every spot, had its presiding divinity. They assigned gods to fountains, rivers, groves, gardens, the earth, the sea, and even hell itself. The principal celestial gods, (*dii majores*;) were Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Apollo, Bacchus, Venus, Juno, and Minerva. Their terrestrial gods, or inferior deities, were Saturn, Ceres, Diana, Neptune, Cybele, Prosperine, and Pluto. To some of these deities, the most splendid temples were erected. That of Diana at Ephesus, mentioned in Acts, xix. 27, was one of the most magnificent works of human skill.

To their gods were attributed the basest and most wicked passions, and the most abominable

conduct. "What were Saturn, and Moloch, Venus, and Bacchus but cruelty, lust, and intemperance personified? And what were their altars, and temples, and groves, but scenes of the grossest pollution, and often of the most horrid crimes?" The festivals in honor of Bacchus, were celebrated with every species of the most infamous debauchery. The reins of every base passion were thrown loose, and whole cities gave themselves up to every disgusting form of intemperance and lust. Eph. iv. 19. In the temple of Venus at Corinth, there were more than a thousand prostitutes. 1 Cor. v. 9, 10; vi. 9. 2 Cor. xii. 21. Lewdness received all the countenance and encouragement of a religious rite, acceptable to the gods.

Some of their religious rites were bloody and cruel. The blood of human victims was poured out in sacrifice in most heathen countries during the period we are now contemplating. This horrid custom prevailed even among the most enlightened nations. Erechtheus, king of Athens, and the famous Roman general Marius, sacrificed their own daughters. At the siege of Carthage, by Agathocles, 336 B. C. two hundred children of the noblest citizens were sacrificed

at once. On another occasion, the Carthaginians having obtained a victory, sacrificed the handsomest of their captives, the flame of whose funeral pile set their camp on fire. Often the wretched victims were buried alive. This practice was not wholly abolished in Rome till the time of Adrian, A. D. 118.

To some of the pagan gods, cruel scourgings were regarded as acceptable. Boys were whipped with bloody severity on the altar of Diana Ortina, at Sparta. Bacchus had an altar in Arcadia, where young persons were beaten to death with bundles of rods.

The whole pagan religious system of these times presented a most humiliating spectacle of the debasement and depravity of the human heart. In the absurd abominations every where practiced as religious rites, the prince and the philosopher joined hand and hand with the vilest of the common people. And the same dark cloud of superstition covered them all. The tale of fooleries exhibited in consultation of oracles, entrails of beasts, flight of birds, and various magic arts, would be endless.

The views entertained respecting a future world during this period, may be inferred from

the opinions of the philosophers. Some denied all future existence, Acts, xvii. 32, adopting and acting upon the motto, "let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die." Others regarded it as a matter of entire uncertainty whether the soul survived the body. The dying Socrates expressed himself doubtfully on the subject, and Cicero, though he had reasoned largely on this very subject, concludes the discussion of several different opinions with the declaration, "which of these is true, God only knows; and which is most probable, is a very great question." Seneca reviewing the reasonings of philosophers before him says, "Immortality, however desirable, is rather promised than proved by those great men." If this was all the light these luminaries could furnish, how deep the darkness of the common people. Some believed in the transmigration of the soul from one body to another; others contemplated the grave as their eternal habitation, and sadly complained that the sun and stars when set could rise again, but that man, when his day was set, must lie down in darkness and sleep a perpetual sleep. A heathen poet thus laments :

“ Alas, the tender herb and flowery tribes,
Though crushed by winter’s unrelenting hand,
Revive and rise when vernal zephyrs call.
But we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
Bloom, flourish, fade, and fall;—and then succeeds
A long, long, silent, dark, oblivious sleep;
A sleep, which no propitious power dispels,
Nor changing seasons, nor revolving years.”

Moschus Epitaph Bion.

The corruption of morals during this period was most deplorable. Scarcely any thing else could be expected, when so demoralizing a religious system prevailed. The character ascribed to the gods, their quarrels, impurities, treacheries, and base passions, together with the corrupting nature of their religious rites, gave sanction to vice in every form. The most abandoned debauchee might plead divine example. There were other causes of corruption.

The examples and influence of rulers, philosophers, men of genius, etc. Group together the rulers of the heathen world during the period now in review. Pre-eminent among them were Agathocles, Phyrus, Hannibal, Antiochus Epiphanes, Sylla, Julius Cæsar, Tiberius, Nero, and Domitian. What an influence, by personal

example, did such monarchs as some of these exert on public morals. By their unbounded ambition, inhuman cruelties, and gross sensuality, they encouraged vice and crime by royal sanction and its alliance with greatness. "They ruled, except in a few instances, with capricious tyranny and licentious indulgence, while their prostrate subjects were degraded and trampled down like the mire in the streets, and rendered base, superstitious, and vile in manners and conduct."

Bring together now the men of genius, poets, philosophers, and what was their influence in respect to the general corruption? While the few ventured to stem the torrent, the many contributed to swell its foaming waters. They sanctioned the absurdities of polytheism—countenanced oracles as divinely inspired—apologized for the impure abominations of pagan worship, and thus contributed to keep up the moral darkness that prevailed. Some of the most gifted minds, especially among the poets, sanctioned licentiousness. They gave vice all the attraction of genius. Lycurgus, Cato, Zeno founder of the Stoics, Diogenes, and even Socrates, countenanced impure indulgences. And in allu-

sion to lewdness Cicero, even before a public assembly of the Roman people, exclaims, "When was this found fault with? When was it not allowed? Can the time be named when this practice, now lawful, was not accounted so?" "The most notorious vices," says Quinctilian, (who flourished soon after Christ,) speaking of the philosophers of his times, "are concealed under that name; and they do not labor to maintain the character of philosophers by virtue of study, but conceal the most vicious lives under an austere look and singular dress." It was an avowed doctrine of the Stoics, that self-murder was lawful. Cato supported this doctrine both by precept and example; and Pliny represents a timely death what every man may procure for himself. Marcus Antonius says of suicide, "If my house be smoky, I go out of it; and why is this looked upon as a great matter?"

Popular amusements, while they indicated great corruption, contributed greatly to its increase. Among these, the contests of gladiators was distinguished. These were bloody contests between men for the amusement of spectators. They were slaves, or prisoners, and were com-

pelled to fight, the contest usually terminating in death. This barbarous practice occasioned an horrid waste of human life, amounting sometimes to twenty thousand victims in a month. Thousands of both sexes witnessed these bloody scenes.

The theatre, often licentious in the extreme, poured a debasing influence upon the public mind. There is no decent language in which we can explain what was publicly exhibited in the Roman theatre. Public festivals, especially those in honor of the gods, sanctioning under the garb of religion scenes of riot and debauchery, aided powerfully in the work of corruption.

Cruelty is a revolting feature of this period of heathenism. Besides the gladiatorial shows above named, inhumanity to slaves, was an affecting token of this. Their masters had the absolute power of life and death. As witness, they testified under the exquisite tortures of the rack. If a master was slain in his own house, and the author could not be discovered, all his slaves were put to death. They were sometimes drowned in fish-ponds to render the fish more delicate eating.

The *exposure of infants* was a common prac-

tice through all the ancient heathen world. "The exposition of children," says Gibbon, "was the prevailing and stubborn vice of antiquity. The Roman empire was stained with the blood of infants till such murder was prohibited by the emperor Valentinian." By a law of Lycurgus, infants were brought before certain public officers for examination, and the weakly and deformed were put to death. This horrid practice was also sanctioned by the laws of Romulus, and approved by Plutarch and Seneca, distinguished philosophers. Among the more barbarous nations, aged parents were exposed, as a common practice, to perish by want, even by their own children, to avoid the trouble and expense of their support.

The whole period now under review was one of almost incessant *wars*. Human blood was almost constantly flowing. When nations were not dashed against each other and broken like a potter's vessel, they were scourged by civil dissensions, more destructive still of morals and happiness. And these wars were carried on with savage ferocity. The utter desolation of the conquered country—the butchery, often with severest tortures, of all taken in arms; the sale

into hopeless and most wretched captivity, of women and children, were the common features of warfare.

The administration of justice, though attended in the more enlightened countries with regular forms, was subject to the most odious corruption. Cicero says of Greece, "That nation never regarded the sacredness and obligation of the oaths of witnesses. They are entirely ignorant of their force, their binding power and importance. *Let me have your testimony as a loan,* belongs entirely to the Greeks." And Juvenal, a Roman writer, shows that regard to oaths, and fidelity in performing contracts, was not more common in Rome than Greece. Various kinds of torture were employed to extort confession of guilt, and the most absurd ordeals, as trials by fire, or water, or poison, were also used to discover criminality, all involving an utter perversion of justice.

My limits forbid a more particular discussion of this subject. The principal facts above detailed, respect chiefly two of the most enlightened pagan nations. These facts are furnished by heathen writers themselves, who would not be likely to draw too dark a picture. And we have

every assurance that the moral condition of all the other heathen nations was equally, if not more deplorable. And in confirmation of all that has now been said, let the reader peruse and ponder the description given of heathenism in the Holy Scriptures. Let him read the last fourteen verses of the first chapter of Paul's epistle to the Romans. This awful picture of human depravity was drawn by an eye-witness of heathen abominations; and more than all by one, who "wrote as he was moved by the Holy Ghost," and who must, therefore, have been infalliably "guided into all truth." 1 Peter, iv. 3; Eph. iv. 17, 19; 1 Cor. vi. 11. The criminality of the heathen, and their consequent exposure to the eternal displeasure of God, is set forth in the New Testament with the greatest plainness. For a particular discussion of this point the reader is referred to a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER III.

Modern Heathenism.

HAVING presented my readers with a brief view of what heathenism was in ancient times, I anticipate the inquiry, "Has not the world improved? Is not the condition of pagan countries so different from what it once was, that the ancient description will not suit now? Are not the heathen so far improved in moral character, and therefore, so much more favorably situated in respect to their eternal prospects, that there is not the same reason that there once was to be anxious about their final condition?"

To this inquiry it may be replied, and ten thousand melancholy facts sustains the statement, in no one important respect has the heathen world improved. The prominent features

of their character are essentially the same, as when Paul drew the dark picture found in his epistle to the Romans. Wherever pure heathenism is found now, that picture is a true delineation. Go through the lands that sit in darkness, and as you mingle with their benighted millions, open and read the inspired account, and you would say with a bleeding heart, "Lo, all these abominations are here!" But before proceeding to the discussion, which will make this manifest, let us survey the extent of modern heathenism, the countries which have never been enlightened by the gospel.

Almost the whole of Asia may be regarded as sitting in darkness. The Mohammedan countries embraced in it, are not pagan in name, though as it respects moral condition, they are but one remove from paganism. The regions of Asia, which are properly heathen, are extensive portions of Siberia, Chinese Tartary, China Proper, Japan and neighboring islands, Thibet, Eastern and Western Hindoostan, the Birman empire, Siam and Cochin China. To these exceedingly populous countries, add various islands of the sea; the principal of which are New Holland, New Zealand, New Guinea, Bor-

neo, Sumatra, Java, Ceylon, Madagascar, and the Philippine, Maldivian, Carolinas, and Friendly islands. We look next at Africa, a large portion of which has never yet been visited by civilized man, and of course, has never heard the sound of the gospel. In North and South America we find numerous tribes still in darkness. There are many lesser regions of the earth, and numerous islands of the sea, not embraced in this enumeration, in a similar moral condition. Over these immense regions, the prince of darkness still extends his sceptre, and binds down benighted millions in cruel bondage. There are indeed, here and there, verdant spots redeemed from the desert, and which like "sunny islands amid stormy seas," relieve and gladden the eye of the observer. But still, an almost boundless wilderness remains unreclaimed. Darkness still covers the earth, and gross darkness the people. It is estimated that there are not less than five hundred millions of our race still strangers to the true God and the glorious gospel of his Son.

The regions of heathenism are, in other respects, among the fairest on the globe. No where has the God of nature been more lavish

of his bounties. Stupendous mountains, noble rivers verdant plains, present, according to eye-witnesses, the most sublime and enchanting scenery. A most prolific soil pours forth almost spontaneously a profuse supply of the necessities and luxuries of life. A genial climate secures against many of the privations of other regions of the earth. In some of these countries, the precious stones and precious metals abound, and in others are to be found the richest spices and perfumes. If we were to select that portion of the globe, in which, more than in any other, could be found the richest benefactions of the great Creator, we should probably select a region now enveloped in moral darkness; we should point to a land of stupid, impure, and debased idolaters.

And these millions of benighted minds show no want of sagacity and genius. Some of the fine arts are carried to perfection. What specimens of consummate skill and ingenuity can be found. Witness the productions of India, China, and Japan. What a vast amount of intellectual and moral power, throughout all the regions of heathenism, slumbers in inactivity, or is constantly and monstrously perverted. Over the

loveliest regions of earth, and over a large portion of the energies of the human race does Satan still sustain his gloomy dominion. Paganism spreads her dark mantle over more than half the surface of the globe, and over more than one half her population pours the darkness of moral midnight !

CHAPTER IV.

Idolatry of the Heathen.

As has been already shown, (chapters i. and ii.) that from a very early period mankind have been worshippers of false gods. The bestowment of divine homage on other objects than the only living and true God, has been one of the most common forms of human wickedness in every period of time. And it is most affecting and humiliating to see what men are willing to put in the place of the true God.

The *Hindoos* worship three principal gods, Brahma, the creator; Vishnu, the preserver; and Siva, the destroyer. Beside these, they make almost every living creature an object of worship. Such as the cow, the ox, the ape, the serpent, &c. are the most prominent. They

worship, also, a variety of malignant demons. The Hindoo gods, like those of Greece and Rome, are described as possessing the most scandalous characters, and indulging the most disgusting vices. The records of their debaucheries are books of matchless obscenities, yet they are read with the greatest delight by the Hindoos, and are the first books put into the hands of their children when learning to read. The images representing these gods are innumerable, and receive, according to the depraved taste of the Hindoo, every horrid and every disgusting shape. And the religious rites paid to them correspond to their characters, being a most revolting compound of impurity and cruelty.*

The ancient *Chinese* were worshippers of the sun and moon, but afterward received the religion of Budhu from India. They have innumerable temples filled with idols, attended by priests called bonzes, of whom there is said to be not less than a million in the empire. They also worship a multitude of imaginary spirits who are supposed to preside over the seasons of the year, over mountains, rivers, houses, &c. and who influence all the affairs of men. The

* Dr. Ward.

Japanese worship a great variety of deities. They are called *sin*, or *kami*, and various and often the severest tortures are inflicted to obtain their favor. In the *Philippine Islands*, the sun, moon, and stars, the four elements, and serpents, are worshipped. In the *Sandwich Islands*, before the gospel prevailed, they worshipped idols of wood, carved into every hideous shape, to which expensive sacrifices were made, and commonly human victims. In *Thibet*, idolatrous worship is given to the grand lama, a man who sustains the office of pontiff, or high priest of that country. His palace is magnificent and rich. Offerings are sent there from almost every part of central Asia. He is regarded as possessing all the attributes of deity, and the remote Tartar nations believe him to be God indeed, and call him the "everlasting Father of heaven." The *New Zealanders* worship an invisible being, called the "immortal shadow;" and their rites are most offensive and disgusting. Many tribes of *South Africa* have few, or no ideas of a Supreme Being, and no worship except a superstitious reverence for a peculiar insect called the "shining beetle." The various tribes of *North American Indians* believe in one Supreme Being,

whom they call the Great Spirit, and in various subordinate divinities, and the worship of the luminaries of heaven. The natives of the North West Coast regard the yealth, or crow, as the creator of the world.

The worship of devils, or malignant demons, prevails in most pagan countries, and receives a corresponding service in bloody and cruel rites. Their favor is gained only by the infliction of some kind of suffering, and often by the sacrifice of human victims.

In different parts of the heathen world now, as in ancient times, divine worship is paid to a great variety of animate and inanimate objects. By one, the divinity is supposed to reside in a buffalo; by another, in a wolf; by another, in a bird; by another, in a rattlesnake; and thus every animal, and almost every reptile, is deified. Others regard certain plants, rivers, trees, stones, &c. as the residence of the Deity, and accordingly worship them. The souls of departed men also are deified, and often, as in China, the most costly sacrifices are made at their tombs.

In a word, all over the pagan world do they change "the glory of the incorruptible God

into an image made like to corruptible man and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things; they have changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever." Rom. i. 23, 25. Whatever men's depraved taste have chosen, they have fancied a god, whether the Creator's works or their own. The language of their conduct seems to have been, "give us any object but the true God; bring us any thing in air, earth, or seas, a planet or a reptile, any thing but the Creator, and we will pay it homage."

What a spectacle must be every day presented before the eyes of the living God! Himself thrust out of his creatures' hearts, and all his attributes and honors bestowed on gods that cannot hear and cannot save. By what millions every hour is the great law of Jehovah's kingdom, "thou shalt have no other gods before me," trampled under foot! What contempt is thus poured on his glorious character! What blindness to his glorious works that point it out!

"To whom then will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto him? But the

Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King; at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation." Jer. x. 10.

CHAPTER V.

Vices of the Heathen.

FROM what we have just seen of the debasement of the heathen in respect to the objects of their religious worship, and the corrupting influence of many of their rites, we might infer a deplorable state of morals. Let us now read this dark page of heathenism.

Falsehood and deception. In some heathen countries, those who can practice these most adroitly are regarded as worthy of the highest commendation. The general character of the Chinese is that of fraud, lying, and hypocrisy. "The Hindoos," says Dr. Ward, "will utter the most abominable falsehoods without a blush, and will commit perjuries so atrocious and disgusting as to fill those who visit the courts of

justice with horror.”* “To such a pitch of shameful audacity has the crime of perjury reached in this province, (Hindoostan,) that a total distrust of human testimony is the consequence.”† An habitual disregard of truth is an universal characteristic of these pagans. It is a common sentiment among the people, that in secular affairs lying is absolutely necessary. “They lie so shockingly in things in which they gain nothing, that no one is certain of the truth of what his servant says. But let there be something to be gained, or a fault covered, or a desire felt to injure another, and there are no bounds to their falsehoods but the fear of being discovered.”‡ Among the numerous tribes of western Indians, skill in cunning and deception is a grand object of education. In the natives of the North West Coast “the smallest confidence cannot be placed, when they have a motive to dissemble.”§ And most surprising instances of the accomplishments of the natives

* View, Introduction, pp. 44 and 70.

† Christian Observer, 1813, p. 543.

‡ Friend of India, No. X. p. 367.

§ Miss. Her. 1830, p. 370.

of the various South Sea islands, are narrated by various navigators.

Theft. The above mentioned vices are cultivated and practiced with special reference to the one now considered. Some of the western tribes* pray that they may become expert in stealing, and success is commemorated among their glorious deeds, and regarded as matter of reward in a future world. The natives of the North West Coast “will steal whatever they can lay their hands upon, even though it can be of no conceivable value to them.” The skill of many of the natives of many of the South Pacific isles, has excited the astonishment of Europeans.† This is one of the characteristic vices of the Hindoos.‡ To the question, addressed a chief of South Africa, What is the chief end of man? the immediate reply was given, “For comandos”—the term by which they express their expeditions for the purpose of stealing cattle.§

Intemperance might be mentioned, were it not more a characteristic of civilized countries than

* James' Account, Vol. I. p. 240.

† Sketch of Missions, p. 306.

‡ Friend of India, No. X. p. 367.

§ Discovery and Adventures in Africa, p. 219.

of heathen. Some pagan tribes, who have discovered scarce any other traces of sagacity, have had enough to discover and use the means of intoxication. At the Society Islands, the juice of the *ava*, a kind of plant, was used for this purpose. Afterward the sugar-cane provided something more efficacious. Around the rude stills which furnished their maddening draughts, the natives would gather, and the most horrid scenes of riot, debauchery, and bloodshed would follow.* The introduction of distilled liquors from Christian into heathen lands, has been attended with evils which no language can adequately describe.

Murder. Human life is cheap all over the heathen world. In most cases, the lives of all his subjects are entirely at the disposal of the ruler, and blood is profusely wasted at the caprice of cruel despots. Dr. Carey affirms that a Burman commander ordered five hundred men to be buried alive, which order was instantly obeyed; and the only reason for this inhuman murder was, that these men were recruits sent to the general by an officer whom he disliked.†

* Ellis' Account, Miss. Her. 1825, p. 292.

† Miss. Gaz. article Burmah.

In the kingdom of Dahomy, near the Gulf of Guinea, it is the custom of the king to send to departed forefathers an account of remarkable events occurring in this world. This he does by delivering the message to whoever may happen to be near him, and then ordering his head to be chopped off immediately. To one, who declined the message, declaring he was unacquainted with the way, the tyrant cried, "I'll show you the way," and with one blow made his head fly many yards from his body.* The king of Ashantee in Africa, sacrifices great numbers of human victims when about engaging in any important expedition. On one occasion, two thousand wretches, selected from among his prisoners of war, were slaughtered in honor of the shades of departed kings and heroes.† On occasion of the death of a king, this horrid sacrifice was continued weekly, for three months, consisting each time of two hundred slaves. The wretched victims are brought out in succession, with their arms pinioned; and a *fetish-er*, priest, laying his hand upon the devoted

* Dick's Philosophy of Religion.

† Dupuis' Miss. to Ashantee in 1825.

head, utters a few magic words, while another from behind, with a large scimitar, severs it from the body, when shouts of applause ascend from the surrounding multitude.* In Otaheite, before they were enlightened by the gospel, every species of murder was prevalent. "He that killed a man, was as if he had cut off a dog's neck."† There is scarcely a region of the heathen world where human life is not sacrificed at once, and without remorse, to gratify the depraved passions.

But a most atrocious species of murder is found in the treatment of *aged parents*. 1 Tim. i. 9. At the Society Islands it was formerly the custom to build a booth not far from the house, place the sick and helpless parent in it, and leaving a little provision, never go near him again. Of course, he would soon perish with want. Sometimes tired of waiting on him, the son would pierce his aged and unsuspecting father with a spear. Sometimes the children would pretend they were carrying their father to bathe, when they would throw him into a grave

* Discov. in Africa, p. 199. Miss. Her. 1830, p. 256.

† Sketch of Missions, p. 303.

previously prepared, and stifle his cries, and put an end to his life, by throwing large stones upon him.* The Chinese, Greenlanders, Hindoos, and the inhabitants of many of the Asiatic isles, and various tribes of North American Indians, practice the same unnatural crime.

Infanticide, or the murder of infants and children, belongs to this topic. This horrid practice prevailed, as may be seen in chapters i. and ii. among the ancient heathen. It has probably prevailed ever since. "Hundreds of helpless children," says Mr. Kingsbury, "have been inhumanly murdered among the Choctaws. Sometimes the mother digs a grave and buries it alive soon after it is born. Sometimes she puts it to death by stamping on its breast, by strangling, or knocking it on the head." In Hindoostan the practice of sacrificing female children has been known from time immemorial. "A Hindoo woman cast her child, between three and four years old, into the Ganges, as an offering to the goddess. The little creature made its way to a raft of bamboos that happened to be floating by, and seizing one end of it, was drift-

* Ellis' Account, Miss. Her. 1825, p. 292.

ed along, crying to its unnatural parent for help. She perceiving from the shore the danger of the child's escaping, plunged into the water, tore away its hold, broke its neck, and hurled the life-warm corpse into the middle of the current, by which it was soon drifted out of sight."* Sometimes these helpless infants are put in baskets and exposed upon trees to be destroyed by birds of prey, or left where wild beasts can devour them. "Till within a few years," says Dr. Ward, "mothers might be seen approaching the banks of the Ganges, and casting their living offspring among a number of alligators, and standing to gaze on these monsters quarreling for their prey, beholding the writhing infant in the jaws of the successful animal, and remaining motionless while it was breaking its bones and sucking its blood."† It has been computed that ten thousand children have been murdered in various ways in the single province of Bengal, in a single month. And in the city of Peking, in China, not less than nine thousand are supposed to perish in a year. This horrid

* Tyerman and Bennet's Journal.

† Ward's View.

crime has been, and is now, perpetrated in the isles of the Pacific. At a female prayer meeting in the Sandwich Islands, inquiry was made whether any of those present, while idolaters, had destroyed their children. Six replied, they had respectively killed from one to six of their offspring. A seventh said, "she had never destroyed any of her own, but many for other women, that it was her business, she was hired to do it." These persons, as others had often done, declared they have often seemed to have their murdered children before their eyes, and that their wickedness seemed so great it could never be pardoned.* What a comment do these facts furnish on the inspired statement concerning the heathen, "without natural affection, unmerciful." Rom. i. 31.

To this topic also belongs the horrid custom of *burning widows* on the funeral pile, with their deceased husbands, which, till recently, was common in India. This is indeed often voluntary, but in great number of cases it is not, and then becomes an horrible murder. Dr. Ward, for many years a resident in India, relates the fol-

* Journal of Tyerman and Bennet.

lowing fact. “ About the year 1796, the following atrocious murder was perpetrated at Mujilapoor, about a day’s journey from Calcutta. A Brahmin of that place dying, his wife went to be burnt with the body ; all the previous ceremonies were performed ; she was fastened on the pile, and the fire was kindled. The funeral pile was by some brush-wood and near a river. It was at a late hour when the pile was kindled, and a very dark and rainy night. When the fire began to scorch this poor woman, she contrived to disentangle herself from the dead body, crept from under the pile, and hid herself among the brush-wood. In a little time it was discovered that only one body was upon the pile. The relations having searched for the poor wretch and found her, the *son* dragged her forth, and insisted upon her throwing herself upon the pile again. She pleaded for her life at the hands of her own son, and declared she could not embrace so horrid a death. But she pleaded in vain ; the son urged that he should lose his caste, and that, therefore, he would die, or she should. Unable to persuade her to hang or drown herself, the son and the others then tied

her hands and feet, and threw her on the funeral pile, where she quickly perished.”*

In another case,† “as soon as the flames touched the woman she sprung off from the pile. Immediately the Brahmins seized her, in order to put her again into the flames. She exclaimed, ‘Do not murder me! I do not wish to be burned!’ Some of the company’s officers being present, she was brought home safely.” Facts like these show, that many of these *suttees* are, in fact, most barbarous and cruel murders.

Suicide, or self-murder, is embraced under this topic. This crime, (approved by many ancient philosophers, and by modern infidels, Hume and others,) in some heathen countries, has been regarded as peculiarly acceptable to the gods. To gain this favor, multitudes in India have ended their existence in a great variety of ways. Some have shut themselves up in caverns, or retiring to the forests have ended life by starvation. Great numbers formerly cast themselves under the wheels of the idol car of Juggernaut, and have been crushed

* Christian Observer, 1813, p. 652.

† Ibid, 1820, p. 284.

to death. Others have drowned themselves in the Ganges. Others have flung themselves from lofty heights upon sharp instruments, which inflicted death. Machines have been made, in which, by means of an instrument made in the shape of a half moon, with a sharp edge, the infatuated devotee could sever his head from his body.* But by no form of suicide has there been so frightful a waste of human life, as by the funeral pile, where widows were burned alive. By official statements it is ascertained that the number of *suttees*, in the Bengal presidency, from 1815 to 1824, nine years, were 5,997. These were either burned or buried alive! In the Madras and Bombay presidencies, official statements for the same period, give 625; whole number 6,632. Dr. Ward in his valuable work on India, estimates the number of victims in all Hindoostan, at 5,000 annually.† Facts like the following, from authentic writers, will give some idea of the nature and extent of this horrid custom of heathenism.”‡ In the year 1799, twenty-two females were burnt alive

* Miss. Register, 1830, p. 506.

† Miss. Herald, 1829, p. 131.

‡ Christian Observer, 1813, p. 652. Do. p. 653.

with the dead body of Unutu, a Brahmin. At the first kindling of the fire, only three of the wives had arrived. *The fire was kept kindled three days!* When one or more arrived, the ceremonies were gone through with, and they threw themselves upon the blazing fire. On the first day *three* were burned; on the second and third days *nineteen* more. Some of these wives were forty years old, some but sixteen; three had lived with him, the others had seldom seen him." "A Koollin Brahmin died at Chuna-kule, who had married twenty-five women, thirteen of whom died during his life-time, the remaining *twelve* perished with him on the funeral pile, leaving thirty children to deplore the fatal effects of this horrid system." Another Brahmin died near Serampore, who had married forty women, all but eighteen had died before him. On this occasion a fire, *extending ten or twelve yards in length* was prepared, into which the remaining *eighteen* threw themselves, leaving more than forty children, many of whom are still living." It is a matter of rejoicing to every human heart, that at a meeting of the East India Company in March, 1827, a resolution was passed for the prevention of this inhuman practice.

Some of the deluded fanatics of India cause themselves to be buried alive. A round pit is dug of sufficient depth for a man to stand upright, into which the self-devoted victim descends, and earth is gradually thrown on till he is entirely covered. A tomb of solid masonry is immediately erected over his head. Suicide is practiced among some heathen nations under the idea of afterwards being able to inflict heavier vengeance on enemies, by returning from the invisible world. Among the Japanese, fanatics throw themselves headlong from rocks and precipices, or bury themselves alive in caves, and not unfrequently leap from boats with stone about their necks into the sea. Among the nations of Bali, near Java, self-murder is more common than even in India. At the funeral of a chief, seventy or a hundred women have been known to immolate themselves. The female slaves also devote their lives at the funeral of a royal mistress. They are generally poniarded before their bodies are committed to the flames.*

Lewdness. As in ancient times, so among many modern heathen nations, their gods are the patterns and patrons of impurity. In India,

* Malte Brun.

some of the principal rites in honor of them are of the most disgusting character. And thus this form of vice receives all the encouragement religious solemnities can afford it. Says a missionary*—"When I spoke to a man of the sinfulness of fornication, he said, 'we may do as our gods did. They committed fornication, so may we.' " A resident of thirty years in India† says, "The stories of the dissolute life of their gods; the solemn festivals so often celebrated, from which decency and modesty are wholly excluded; the abominable allusions which many of their daily practices always recall; their public and private monuments, on which nothing is ever represented but the most wanton obscenities; their religious rites, in which prostitutes act the principal part; all these causes, and others that might be named, necessarily introduce among the Hindoos the utmost dissoluteness of manners." The licentiousness of the South Sea Islanders is well known. To such a pitch had it been carried, that horrible diseases were making dreadful ravages among the natives when the missionaries ar-

* Miss. Herald, 1824, p. 74.

† Abbe Dubois, p. 191.

rived. In China,* among various tribes of western Indians,† and indeed, in almost every heathen land, has lust been predominant among human passions. There is the most abundant reason for believing that the various shades and enormities of this vice, ascribed by Paul, Rom. i. to the ancient heathen, are practiced to an equal extent among the modern.

Some of the more prominent vices and crimes of the heathen have now been mentioned. Every thing that pollutes and debases human nature may be found, as we have now seen, upon pagan soil. All manner of abominations grow there in the most rank luxuriance. It is the uniform declaration of those who have gone among the heathen, that none but those who are actually present to behold them, can have any idea what revolting scenes of pollution and depravity are to be every day witnessed. And these are all moral and accountable beings. They are immortal beings. They are endowed with the capacity of knowing, loving, and enjoying

* Leland's Adv. and Ne. Vol. 2. p. 54.

† James' Account, &c. Vol. 1. p. 129.

God. His law is written upon their hearts. Their guilt is "without excuse," God himself being the Judge. "Were the one-hundredth part of the abominations which have been perpetrated under the system of idolatry, in those countries where it has prevailed, to be fully detailed, it would exhibit a picture of depravity and infernal agency, at which the human mind would shrink back with horror!" And the heathen have reason and conscience; the great principles of the divine law, are "written upon their hearts;" and God will call every one of them into judgment. They can stand before him in no other character than that of sinners, and God is a righteous judge. "He will give to every man according to his works."

CHAPTER VI.

Cruelties of the Heathen.

WE have already seen some of these, but the subject needs to be set in a clearer light, and to receive an ampler illustration. We shall thus see the *wretched* as well as degraded condition of the heathen. The word of God declares, Psalm, lxxiv. 20, that "the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty," and that the heathen "are cruel and have no mercy." Jer. vi. 23. "Their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their ways." Rom. iii. 15, 16. Let us contemplate the facts which illustrate this declaration.

Heathen *rulers* have always been cruel. Their power has given them the means of being so, and they have used it most successfully in aug-

menting the amount of human wo. In Burmah, the most barbarous ingenuity is manifested in inventing the most horrid and appalling modes of lingering death. The penal code of Japan is verily written in blood. To hack the criminal in pieces, to open his belly with a knife, to suspend him with iron hooks in his side, or to throw him into boiling oil, were common modes of punishment.* Almost every offence is punished with death, attended with the deepest ignominy and the most exquisite tortures. In the island of Sumatra, the condemned criminal having been pierced with lances, and a mortal wound received, the people run upon him in a rage, cut pieces from the body with their knives, dip them in salt and lemon juice, slightly broil them, and swallow them with savage enthusiasm.† In some nations, criminals are roasted; in others impaled (iron or wooden stakes thrust into or through the body); in others flayed (skinned) alive. In some they are rolled in casks set with iron spikes, pointing inward; in others torn in pieces with red hot pincers of iron.‡ With the horrid barbarities common among the savages, all are familiar.

* Malte Brun.

† Ibid.

‡ Pond's Lectures.

The miseries of *war* are numerous and terrible enough in any circumstances, but among the heathen they assume an aspect of peculiar ferocity and cruelty. Many African tribes, and the nations of many islands of the sea, are constantly occupied in fierce and bloody wars. They kill indiscriminately, not sparing women or children. When the horrid massacre is over, they either feast and gorge themselves on the spot, with the flesh of their enemies, or carry off the dead bodies of as many as they can to be devoured at home, with acts of brutality too shocking to be described.* Mr. Ellis, speaking of the Society Island says,† “The barbarity of their wars was dreadful. Here a warrior might be seen tossing little children and infants into the air, and catching them on the point of his spear, where they expired in agonies. There another might be seen, dragging in savage triumph, five or six lifeless children by a cord, which had been passed successively through their heads, from ear to ear. Yonder all covered with gore, another might be seen, scooping with his hands, the blood from the gushing trunk of his decapitated foe, and drinking it

* Cook's Voyages. † Miss. Herald, 1825, p. 293.

with hideous exultation." In Dupuis' journal in Ashantee, Africa, we find the following fact. "Anqua, the king, having in an engagement taken five of his Antese enemies prisoners, he wounded them all over; after which, with more than brutal fury, he satiated, though not tired himself by sucking their blood at their gaping wounds. But bearing a more than ordinary grudge at one of them, he caused him to be laid bound at his feet, and his body to be pierced with hot irons, gathering the blood that issued from him in a vessel, one half of which he drank, and offered up the rest to his god." The alleviations of the miseries of war in civilized countries, are unknown among the heathen. The ferocious passions blaze with incredible fury. Man seems an incarnate demon.

The *treatment of slaves* is an affecting aspect of heathen cruelty. In this they are co-partners in guilt and inhumanity with many civilized nations. The heathen countries where slaves are held, are comparatively few, but their miseries are indescribable. In the interior of Africa, where tribes invade each other, tempted by the slave traders from Christian lands, we find cases of the most revolting inhumanity.

They are dragged over burning deserts ; and exposed to the scorching rays of a vertical sun, and are compelled by the lash to keep pace with the inhuman captor, on horses or camels. Water often fails, and also provisions, scantily provided for the long and dreary journey, and multitudes perish under their intolerable sufferings. “ Every few miles,” says Major Denham,* a traveller in Africa, “ a skeleton was seen through the whole day ; some were partially covered with sand ; one hand often lay under the head, and frequently both, as if in the act of compressing it. We spent the night amid the unearthed remains of the victims of persecution and avarice, after a day’s journey of twenty-six miles, in the course of which one of our party counted an *hundred and seven* of these skeletons. During the last two days,” he continues, “ we had passed on an average, from *sixty to eighty or ninety* of these skeletons each day ; but the numbers that lay about the wells of El Kamar were countless. Those of two women, whose perfect and regular teeth bespoke them young, were particularly shocking. Their arms still remained clasped around each other as they had expired, although

* African Discov. pp. 256—7.

the flesh had long since perished by being exposed to the burning rays of the sun, and the blackened bones only were left; the nails of the fingers, and some of the sinews of the hand, also remained; and a part of the tongue of one of them still appeared through the teeth. While I was dozing on my horse, one day about noon, overcome by the heat of the sun, I was suddenly awakened by a crashing under his feet, which startled me exceedingly. I found my horse had stepped upon the perfect skeleton of two human beings, cracking their brittle bones under his feet, and by one trip of his foot separating a skull from the trunk, which rolled on like a ball before him." These scenes are rivalled only by the horrors of "the middle passage," whose perpetrators bear not a heathen, but the Christian name.

Cruelties to parents have already been noticed. A single fact only will be added. An eye witness writes,* "The son, accustomed from his tenderest years to use bad language to his mother, and even *to strike her*, seldom has his affections increased by his wife, who too often

* Friend of India, No. X. p. 382.

hates to see the poor aged mother. She, unhappy woman, having never acquired a single idea from any book, to enable her to counsel her son, or secure his esteem, is driven out to labor in the most slavish manner, until some day she faints under the burden and the heat, lies in the street possibly an hour, and is then taken up, not to her son's house, (of a person suspected to be near death, they have the utmost horror,) but to the river side, and there choked with liquid mud in the form of Gunga water, to fit her for heaven, or left to expire possibly during the night, if not half devoured by the jackals while living; no one regretting her death for a single moment." Contrast this with the filial reverence, grateful attentions, affectionate obedience, and tender sympathy sanctioned by divine law, and which generally prevails in Christian countries.

Cruelty to children presents another dark feature of heathenism. This also has been noticed: but one fact more. "A travelling slave dealer, passing through the village of an African tribe, purchased several of their children of both sexes. Among others, one woman had an only daughter, whom she parted with for a necklace of

beads. The unhappy girl, who might have been 13 or 14 years of age, on being dragged from the threshold of her parent's hut, clung distracted to the knees of her unfeeling mother; and looking up wistfully and bursting into a flood of tears, exclaimed with vehemence, 'Oh! mother, do not sell me! what will become of me! and what will become of yourself in your old age, if you suffer me to leave you? Who will fetch you rice and milk? who will pity you when you die? Have I been unkind to you? Oh! mother, do not sell your only daughter. My mother, do not push me away from you; do not sell your only daughter to be the slave of a stranger!' Useless tears,—vain remonstrance. The unnatural, relentless mother, shaking the beads in her face, thrust her only child from her embraces! and the slave dealer drove the agonized girl from the place of her nativity, which she was to behold no more!" Heathenism turns the hearts of parents against their children; sunders the tenderest ties of nature; and steels the heart against the most moving appeals to its compassion. It renders it "implacable, unmerciful."

Some of *the customs* of heathenism are excessively cruel. We have space to notice only a

few. Among the natives of Borneo, no young man can be allowed to marry, unless to show his valor he can bring two or three heads of persons, whom he has killed with his own hands. These trophies are received by the women with the highest joy and gladness; they rush into the water to meet their returning heroes, and receiving the heads from their hands, hold them up and suck the blood that may be yet dripping from them; or plunging them into the water, drink that which falls off them. Their houses are adorned with the skulls of the slaughtered victims, and their necks are garnished with rows of human teeth hanging about them.* “Every Hindoo,” says Dr. Ward, “in the hour of death is hurried to the side of the Ganges, or some other sacred river, if near enough to one of them, where he is exposed to the burning sun by day, and the dews and cold by night. Just before the soul quits the body, he is immersed to the middle in the stream, while his relations stand around him tormenting him in these last moments with superstitious rites, and increasing an hundred fold, the pains of dying. Very often,

* Miss. Herald, 1830, p. 291.

when recovery might be hoped for, these barbarous rites bring on premature death." [For account of cruelties of various ordeals, trials, &c. see chapter on ideas of justice among the heathen.]

Indifference to the miseries of others, is another revolting trait in the heathen character. Helplessness, either in old age or in infancy, though most moving in its appeals for aid, as we have already seen, is treated with cruel disregard; nay, is the very occasion of special acts of inhumanity. How often has the unfeeling heathen mother, answered the cries of her infant, its only means of expressing its wants and sorrows, by stamping it to death, or strangling it, or throwing it from her to perish by neglect? The sick, instead of awakening compassion, are treated with cruel, and consequently often fatal neglect. The poor find the tender mercies of their countrymen cruelty. "As we passed," says a missionary in India, "we saw a poor man lying dead among the heaps of grain. He had just picked up a few husks of peas and grain, which it appears he had been attempting to eat, but was too far gone. Not a single man in the market would give this poor creature one handful of wheat to save his life. These people have no more feel-

ing for the poor, than if they were dogs. They show no mercy, no pity !”* A frightful majority of the heathen might adopt with the strictest truth, the appeal found Matt. xxv. : “ When saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee, or thirsty and gave thee drink ? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in ? or naked and clothed thee ? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee ? ” The suffering in heathen lands, find pity’s bright eye dim, and compassion’s warm heart a rock of ice.

The heathen are cruel toward *the weak and defenceless* who fall into their hands. Such sometimes receive “ no small kindness ; ” but these are exceptions to their general conduct. In 1782, an Indiaman bound to London, was wrecked upon the coast of Caffraria in Africa. The savage ocean cast the unhappy passengers and crew into the hands of their more savage fellow-men. The first natives they encountered plundered them of what they liked, and pelted them with stones. Every successive band continued to rob and beat them with inhuman cruelty. Though fainting with gnawing hunger

* Chris. Observer.

and excessive thirst, their sufferings only furnished occasion for derision and renewed insult. Endeavoring to traffic in a village for food, one of the company offered the inside of his watch for a calf. No sooner had the natives obtained the price, than they withheld the calf and drove the miserable sufferers from the village. With such cruel perfidy and inhumanity, were they treated during the whole of their miserable wanderings. And such were their sufferings from the hands of the barbarous heathen, that out of one hundred and twenty, only fifteen emaciated beings reached the Cape of Good Hope. A French gentleman,* wrecked on another part of the African coast, gives the following account. "No sooner had we reached the shore, than the natives, armed with cutlasses and clubs, fell upon us with incredible ferocity; and I soon had the anguish of seeing some of my companions wounded, whilst others stripped and naked, lay expiring on the sand. The women, enraged that they could not pillage the ship, threw themselves upon us, and tore from us the few articles of dress we had left. Falling

* M. De Brisson.

into the hands of another company, we were beaten in the most unmerciful manner. My mind was so much affected that I could not refrain from tears. Some of the women having observed this, instead of being moved with compassion, threw sand in my eyes, 'to dry up my tears,' as they expressed it." "My blood," continues he, "trickled down the sides of the camel on which they had placed me, having no clothes to secure me from the friction of the animal's hair. The sight, instead of moving the pity of the barbarians, afforded them a subject of diversion. They sported with my sufferings, and that their enjoyment might be still higher, they spurred on their camels. Arriving in a village, the women spit in our faces, and pelted us with stones. The children too, copying their example, tormented us in various ways, pulling our hair, and scratching us with their nails, while their mothers ordered them to attack us, and took pleasure in seeing them torment us. The second captain having fallen down, through weakness, beneath an old gum-tree, became a prey to the attacks of a monstrous serpent. Some famished crows, by

their cries, frightened away the venomous animal, and alighting on the body of the dying man, were tearing it in pieces, while four savage monsters in human shape, beheld this scene without offering the least assistance. I attempted to run toward him, and if possible, save his life; but the barbarians stopped me, and after insulting me said, 'this Christian will soon become a prey to the flame.' "

Self-torture is another revolting feature of heathen cruelty. In most pagan nations the idea, in all ages, has prevailed, that voluntary sufferings were peculiarly pleasing to the Deity. Accordingly, they have been, and now are practiced in almost every form in which they can be inflicted. We turn to India for the most affecting exhibitions of this form of madness and folly. Some of these deluded fanatics put burning coals upon their heads; some keep their arms stretched out in painful positions till the use of them is entirely lost; others pierce their skin in various places, through which sticks, or cords are inserted, with which they dance through the streets; some pierce their tongue; others dance on burning coals with naked feet;

others suspend themselves over slow fires ; others swing in the air by hooks thrust through the muscles and skin ; others cast themselves on iron spikes inserted in bags of straw. Many have voluntarily thrown themselves under the wheels of idol cars, and when not killed, are horribly mangled. Respecting this form of heathen folly and cruelty, Dr. Buchanan writes, "After the tower containing the idol had proceeded some way, a pilgrim announced that he was ready to offer himself a sacrifice to the idol. He laid himself down in the road before the tower as it was moving along, lying on his face, with his arms stretched forward. The multitude passed around him leaving the space clear, and he was crushed to death by the wheels of the tower. A shout of joy was raised to the god. He is said to *smile when the libation of blood is made.*" He adds, "The horrid solemnities continue. Yesterday a woman devoted herself to the idol. She laid herself down on the road in an oblique direction, so that the wheel did not kill her instantaneously as is generally the case ; but she died in a few hours.

This morning as I passed 'the place of skulls,' nothing remained but her bones."*

"Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parent's tears."—*Milton*.

Another most revolting feature of heathen cruelty is found in the offering of *human sacrifices*. A more horrid exhibition of human depravity can scarcely be found than this presents. This "sacrifice unto devils," as it is called in the Scriptures, has prevailed among the heathen from a very early period. Its existence is recognized by the prohibitions of the Mosaic law concerning it. And it prevailed, as we have already seen, during all the period embraced in the Old and New Testament times. And from those days to ours, have pagan altars streamed with human blood.

Our ancestors practiced it in Britain, and in ancient Mexico. It has been said, fifty thousand victims have been sacrificed in a single year, under circumstances of such dreadful cruelty, as to make us shudder at the recital.† In Africa this custom prevails on important oc-

* Buchan. Resear. p. 107.

† Dick's Philos. of Relig.

casions ; at which an incredible amount of human blood is wasted by despotic rulers. This was one of the principal requisitions of religious worship among many of the South Sea islanders. When a large sacrifice of this kind was ordered, the king sent to the chiefs of the several districts a number of stones, denoting the number of victims to be punished. The chiefs sent by night to whatever huts they chose, took off the heads of the requisite number, and sent them in baskets to the temple. In some cases every post of the temple was placed upon a human body slaughtered for the purpose. The shark was formally worshipped in the Sandwich islands, and human victims offered. On the occasion, the priests sallied forth, and wherever a company of persons were assembled, a rope with a noose, was suddenly and unexpectedly thrown among them, and the first person taken in the snare, man, woman, or child, was strangled, cut in pieces, and thrown into the sea to be devoured by the shark. The sacrifice of children, often by their own mothers, was common, till within a few years, in India. The Bible account of this abomination in ancient times applied in all its force. “ Yea, they sac-

rificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and their daughters—and the land was polluted with blood.” Psalms, cvi. 37, 38. This horrid rite of paganism has disappeared before the progress of the gospel, and there are but few regions where it is now practiced.

There is still another form of heathen wretchedness, which must not be omitted in this recital of human wo. It is not self-torture, strictly speaking, but yet it is the result of a pagan practice voluntarily pursued. I refer to the *miserias attendant on pilgrimages*, performed especially among the deluded idolaters of India. Juggernaut is one of their most celebrated idols, and is situated in the southern part of India. The country around, as well as the city where it is erected, is regarded as sacred; and they are believed to be certain of happiness who die in the immediate vicinity of their favorite idol. This is of course a place of resort from all parts of India. More than 300,000 people have been known to visit it in a single year. No small portion of these are of the lower ranks in life, and have no more of worldly property than is sufficient to bring them here. The consequences

are want, disease, starvation, and death in a thousand horrid forms. The waste of human life is dreadful. "We know," says a traveller, "that we are approaching Juggernaut, and yet are more than fifty miles from it, by the human bones we find strewed by the way." Says an eye-witness, "the poor pilgrims were to be seen in every direction dead, or in the agonies of death—lying by fives, tens, and twenties: and in some parts there were hundreds to be seen in one place.

"The whole region round about is white with human bones; and as the bodies of the dead remain unburied, the effluvia of putrid flesh attracts the vultures and jackalls, which come in great numbers to partake of the horrid feast." "I saw one poor creature," says an observer, "who was partly eaten, though alive; the crows had made an incision in the back, and were pulling at this wound when I came up. The poor creature feeling the torment, moved his head and shoulders for a moment; the birds flew up; but immediately returned and recommenced their meal."* Says another eye-witness,† "I

* Miss. Reg. 1826, p. 350.

† Dr. Buchanan,

beheld a distressing scene this morning at 'the place of skulls;' a poor woman lying dead, or nearly dead, and her two children by her, looking at the dogs and vultures which were near. They were not noticed by the passers by. I asked them where was their home. They said, *'they had no home but where their mother was!'* "

There is probably no spot on earth where heathenism is exhibited in so many horrid and revolting forms as around the temple of Jugger-naut; it would seem that human depravity could not reach a higher pitch than it has reached here; that greater abominations could not be found in any portion of the kingdom of darkness. The most hateful and odious passions of the human heart seem to blaze here with a fury known no where else on earth. Here the malignant enemy of God and man seems rejoicing over triumphs equalled no where else but in the world of despair. Over these horrid scenes might be written with tremendous truth, "Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god." Psalms, xvi. 4.

This melancholy recital of human wo need not be carried farther. How dismal the picture

now before us ! The heathen *happy* ! In the name of humanity we might ask, what then constitutes wretchedness ? Heathenism all over the earth is a fountain of unutterable wo. Could the shrieks and groans it occasions be gathered into one voice, it would shake the ground we tread upon. Were the blood it sheds to be collected before our eyes, a vast river would roll down its waves of gore. What sounds of lamentation are heard every hour through the dark regions of the pagan world ! What scenes of unregarded suffering ; unnoticed or unpitied wo ! Charity opens not her hand—sympathy seldom sheds a tear—the sigh of the orphan is not heard—the destitute may perish unrelieved—the sick may languish unregarded ; the dying die, with none to soothe, and none to mourn ! “ For the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty ! ”

CHAPTER VII.

Heathen ideas of Justice.

It needs no special effort to show how much human happiness is involved in the prevalence of correct sentiments respecting the rights of men, and the use of proper means to secure those rights. As on all other subjects connected with man's highest welfare, so on this, the Bible pours a flood of light. It lays down those great principles for the government of human conduct, obedience to which secures to every man his privileges—spreads a broad shield of protection over all that is dear to him—and permits every man to sit down under his own vine and fig-tree, with none to molest or to make afraid. Every government where the gospel has prevailed has felt the benign power of Christianity in

this respect; and felt it in proportion to the extensiveness of its spiritual influence. Christianity compels men to recognize and respect each others' rights. One of its fundamental laws is written in these words, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." But leaving lands enlightened by the gospel, let us penetrate the gloom of those that sit in darkness. Let us see what heathenism is in respect to justice.

And we are met at the outset with the melancholy fact, that those among the heathen, who are the *proper guardians* of men's rights, and can accomplish most in securing them, are the most ready and the most ruthless in trampling them under foot. Pagan rulers, the world over, are despotic; maintaining entire sovereignty over property, liberty and life, and disposing of either or all, as their caprice dictates. Their subjects have no security against spoliation of every thing dear to them. At any moment, possessions, friends, life itself, may be sacrificed. Complaint against the oppression of rulers meets not contempt only, but often sanguinary vengeance. In many countries, great possessions make the owner a more conspicuous mark, and direct toward him the rapacity of the civil power.

It is a well known feature of heathenism to *involve the innocent with the guilty*. Among the Western Indians if a murderer fled, his brother, or nearest relative was liable to suffer in his stead. If the murderer was not as respectable as the person murdered, his relation, or a man of the clan of more respectable standing was liable to death. In Burmah, the wife suffers for the crime of her husband, and children for the crimes of their parents. In Japan, public officers found guilty of mal-administration, not only suffer punishment themselves, but their whole families, and even their remote relatives are put to death. Parents are made responsible by law for the conduct of their children, and every citizen for the conduct of his neighbor; and the crime of an individual involves a street or village in which he resides in the same punishment with himself.*

Disproportion of punishment to crimes, is another feature of heathen injustice. A Hindoo lawgiver enacts that if one of the lower castes speaks contemptuously of a Brahmin, an iron stile ten fingers long shall be thrust into his

* Malte Brun. Spirit of Pilgrims, Vol. IV. p. 489.

mouth red hot. Should he through pride give instruction to a priest concerning his duty, let the king order some hot oil to be poured into his mouth and ear. If he spit upon a Brahmin, his lips were to be cut off; if he plucked his hair, or seized him by the neck, his hands were to be cut off; if he listened to reproaches against a Brahmin, he was to pour hot lead into his ears. These are but a specimen of those odious laws, by which the lower castes of India are oppressed, "and which," says Dr. Ward, "are often executed in the most rigid manner." The taboo system of the South Sea islands, consecrated persons, places, and things, to purposes connected with religion, and a disregard of these absurd impositions was inevitable death. In some pagan countries, crimes of the darkest character are but little noticed, while the transgression of some unimportant regulation, some superstitious imposition, is visited with the direst vengeance. In Burmah, the most appalling and lingering death is inflicted, at the caprice of a ruler, for the offence of chewing opium; while a few shillings will expiate the murder of a wife or child.

Bribery and corruption often defeat the aims of

justice, even where its forms exist. So notorious is this in some countries that redress is not expected because one is in the right. In China, justice* "is ill administered only to those who neglect paying the price." The rich are screened, the poor trampled under foot. In many cases of prosecution, the award depends entirely upon the superior ability of either party to win the judge to his interests.

But in no custom of heathenism is there a more complete prostration of all justice, and even all humanity, than is found in many of their *ordeals or modes by which the guilt or innocence of the accused is determined*. These ordeals are constituted by exposing the accused person to the action of fire, or water, or poison, etc. and if he is injured by the exposure he is declared guilty, if uninjured, innocent; it being supposed the invisible divinity will secure the innocent from harm, while he declares the criminal by refusing to interpose. This practice, this perfect mockery of justice, has prevailed in all ages; and what is matter of wonder among enlightened and even Christian nations, it was

* Malte Brun.

used in England as late as the twelfth century* by law, and employed, in some cases of melancholy fanaticism, in our own, some two centuries ago.

But it now prevails in heathen lands, and often under circumstances of great cruelty. "The queen of Madagascar being ill, she supposed she had been poisoned by some of her female attendants. A number of these were brought to the ordeal of each having, first one joint of a finger cut off; then another of the same; and so on from finger to finger, and from the fingers to the hand, and then to the elbows and shoulders. These were chopped off in succession, as long as the sufferer could endure the torture; that is, till she confessed the crime of which she was only suspected, whether guilty or not."† Among the natives of the western coast of Africa, all charges of crime are decided by preternatural tests.‡ A bar of red hot iron is applied to the flesh; or the arm is thrust into scalding water; and if the natural effects follow, the person's head is immediately struck off.

* Blackstone, Vol. IV. p. 344.

† Tyerman and Bennet's Journal.

‡ Discov. in Africa.

Snail shells applied to the temples, if they stick implies guilt. In New Zealand the accused, and perhaps the acknowledged criminal, is conducted into an open plain. The friends of the deceased throw spears at him, which if he can ward off he escapes death. In Siam it was a custom to expose both parties to the fury of a tiger let loose for that purpose : if the beast spares either, that person is accounted innocent ; if neither, both are to be held guilty ; but if he spares both, the trial is incomplete, and they proceed to a more certain criterion. In Hindoostan the trial, by ordeals of various kinds, is now used, chiefly by various experiments with fire and water. Among various other heathen nations these practices exist ; and a great variety of modes of trial, such as by administering poison, compelling the accused to swim among sharks and crocodiles ; to walk over hot plates of iron, or over burning coals ; or engage in a contest with deadly weapons with another. In most of these trials the accused is certain of conviction and death though innocent. An accusation, therefore, is almost the certain precursor of execution.

How striking the contrast between heathenism and Christianity, in the point considered in

this chapter. A Christian government, just so far as it feels the enlightening and sanctifying influence of the gospel, will employ its power to protect every right of every one of its subjects. It will pour tribulation and anguish upon the invader of their happiness. It will erect a wall of fire around the rights and interests of all committed to its care.

Heathen governments, on the other hand, are for the most part erected on the ruined rights of men. Their foundations are laid in blood ; and they are sustained by oppression and cruelty. The caprice of despots scatters fire-brands, arrows and death on every side. Crime kindles its flame with no power to extinguish and punish ; and where laws exist at all to suppress crime and redress wrong, how often is the innocent buried in the same grave with the guilty ! The forms of justice, how often a perfect mockery ! The innocent and the oppressed groan, while the guilty and powerful triumph.

CHAPTER VIII.

State of Domestic Society among the Heathen.

IN contemplating the condition of benighted nations, it is an object of great interest to a humane heart, to learn the state of the people in social and domestic life. A vast amount of happiness, or misery, is here involved. And we cannot have the whole picture of their true condition before us, without taking this view also. Let us then look in upon the heathen in their domestic scenes, around their fire sides, and in the common intercourse of life. We can thus, as satisfactorily as in any way, learn the true character of heathenism, especially as it respects its influence on human happiness.

The state of domestic life among the heathen is materially affected by various causes. A prom-

inent one is the *influence of government*. Hea-thenism almost universally implies despotism; implies savage rulers and sanguinary laws. Rapacity and inhumanity are common characteristics of those in authority. And hence a powerful and influential example is held up before all classes; an example of inhumanity and rapacity faithfully followed in every pagan land. As the common people see their own rights are not respected by those who have the power to invade them, they learn lightly to esteem the rights of others. Hence we find the quiet and comfort of domestic life continually invaded and broken up. We find tyranny, oppression, theft, falsehood, perjury, treachery, revenge, and cruelty every where prevalent.

Domestic society finds another most fruitful source of corruption and wretchedness in the influence of *pagan religious systems*. The character attributed to their gods, as we have seen, is a most disgusting compound of every thing indecent and wicked. "The very heavens in which they dwell are pervaded with pride and selfishness, jealousy and rage, party and lust." Falsehood, fraud, revenge, adultery, incest, and murder, are the most prominent traits in their

characters, as presented to the contemplation of their worshippers. Hence almost every kind of vice is sanctioned by divine example. And these vices are directly at war with all the interests of domestic life. The worship of malignant demons, demanding cruel sacrifices as their worshippers affirm, often of human blood, tends to extinguish the feelings of humanity. The religious rites offered their various deities, compounded of impurity and cruelty, foster directly lust and inhumanity, those deadly foes of domestic enjoyment.

Some heathenish religious rites, from their horrid nature, inspire and keep up constant terror. In a region of Africa, when one of the royal family dies, human blood must flow as an offering to the gods. "On these occasions, the princes rush out, seize the first person they meet, and drag him in for sacrifice. While this season lasts, therefore, it is with trembling steps that any one crosses his threshold; and when compelled to do so, he rushes along with the utmost speed, dreading every moment the murderous grasp that would consign him to death."*

* Discov. and Adven. in Africa, p. 204.

The superstitious regard for the heavenly bodies in some countries, especially in India, puts into the hands of a cunning and rapacious priesthood the means of great injury to domestic happiness. By the absurd fears they excite respecting the baneful influence of the stars, if not averted by the skill of the priests, a fair opportunity is presented for oppression. "The malignant influence of astrology is daily crossing the path of the husbandman as well as diving into the bosom of every family, whether rich or poor, thus draining them of their substance and tormenting them with visionary apprehensions."*

The odious system of *caste*, so hostile to social happiness, is thus described by an eminent writer.† "This institution has been, and ever will be, one of the greatest scourges which can afflict those who are doomed to suffer under it. It has no regard to merit or demerit. It consigns nine tenths of the people, even before birth, to a state of mental and bodily degradation, in which they are forever shut out from all the liberties, honors, or even religion of the country. It is repugnant to every feeling of jus-

* Miss. Reg. 1830, p. 507.

† Dr. Ward,

tice, benevolence, and humanity. It arms one class of men against another ; it gives rise to the most insufferable pride and ostentation on the one hand, and the most abject state of degradation and apathy on the other. It is a sufficient excuse for not doing an act of benevolence toward another, that he is not of the same caste ; nay, a man dying with thirst, will not accept a cooling draught of water from the hand or cup of a person of lower caste. In short, the caste murders all feelings of benevolence or pity ; and shuts up the heart of man against his neighbor, in a manner unknown even among savage tribes. The loss of caste is the most terrible calamity a Hindoo can suffer. The crime for which it is forfeited, is often of the most trivial kind, or perhaps an unavoidable, or even a benevolent act. The poor wretch is proscribed his father's house, into which he can never enter ; he is deprived of his property and renounced by his friends ; he is excluded from all the comforts and services of religion, and all its supposed benefits after death. Instances have frequently been known where persons have pined away and died on this account."

The *spirit of sympathy and compassion*, so

essential to domestic happiness, is almost unknown among the heathen. The sick, the aged and infirm, instead of awakening by their sufferings the pity, and calling forth the tender attentions of those around them, are often regarded as a nuisance or a burden; are treated with cruel neglect, or carried to the wilderness to perish, or suddenly hurried out of the world, perhaps by their own offspring. The poor have seldom the kind hand of charity opened for their relief; and are often seen perishing under the very eyes of those who have all the means of relieving them. "At the call of the shastre, the Hindoo gives water to the weary traveller during the month Voishaklu; but he may perish at his door without pity or relief, from the first of the following month, no reward being attached to such an act, after these days have expired." The poor are subject to the most grinding oppression, and when aroused to seek redress by some enormous injustice, they find that through bribery and corruption, the case has been prejudged, and they must retire from the tribunal of the judge with a bleeding heart.

The *utter disregard of truth*, common among the heathen, opens a thousand fountains of evil.

Much of the comfort of domestic society depends upon the mutual confidence inspired by a general regard to truth. Painful suspicion, constant distrust, and tormenting anxiety to guard against deception, necessarily results from sun-dering this important bond of human society. But it is broken in every pagan land with the most unblushing effrontery. The most solemnly assumed obligations are violated without hesitation, and perjury hardly recognized as a crime. The consequence of this is, the utter want of confidence among the heathen in each other, and of course, constant jealousy and suspicion, carrying along with them tormenting apprehensions and anxieties.

The *superstitions* of the heathen, add innumerable sorrows to domestic life. They are the means of numberless impositions by the cunning and rapacious, by which the earnings of the poor and needy are wrested from them, and the sorrows of poverty are greatly multiplied. Under its influence, the deluded practice cruel austerities, and submit to the most painful self-denial. Under its cloak, the soothsayer and the sorcerer, found in every heathen land, practice with impunity the most atrocious crimes. This

class of wretches, in several countries, ascribe the various diseases and calamities of those they are called on to relieve, to whom they please; any person disliked, may thus become an object of vengeance, for the accused in such cases are often put to death without inquiry or hesitation.

The *spirit of revenge*, an universal trait of heathenism, greatly multiplies its woes. Vengeance is mine and I will repay, is the spirit that is every where breathed. There being no redress from salutary laws, every man becomes not only his own avenger, but the judge of what measure of retribution is due. It often requires but a spark, to set the dark passions of a pagan's bosom in a blaze. And blood alone can quench the flame. The most unrelenting cruelties are practiced; helpless and innocent women and children are involved in the work of blood; and often whole villages laid in ashes, and whole tribes exterminated, bespeak the fury of a heathen's vengeance.

The *perversion of the marriage relation embitters* domestic life. Polygamy is a most fruitful source of jealousy, envy, malice, and every hateful passion. The dwellings of those who thus odiously pervert this most important insti-

tution, must be full of rivalries and discord, necessarily destructive of social happiness. And often among these numerous and rival claimants of the husband's regard, are to be found the most atrocious acts of wickedness, the offspring of jealousy and revenge. The harsh and tyrannical manner in which wives are treated, often leading to suicide to escape the miseries of their condition, evinces the wretchedness of social life.

The *want of appropriate parental influence*, also greatly increases it. The scenes first presented to the youthful mind, are those suited to debase and corrupt it. Parents "working all uncleanness with greediness," lead their offspring up into life by the same paths. In many heathen lands, the most imposing and impressive of all spectacles to the young mind, those connected with religion, are so mingled with vice and cruelty as powerfully to encourage their unrestrained practice. With scenes of the most rank depravity, are children and youth constantly familiar. Falsehood, theft, murder, lewdness, treachery, and revenge, are passing every hour before their eyes. What can a rising generation be, under such circumstances, but "unto every

good work reprobate." And how fully prepared are they to poison the joys of domestic life. A father's faithful counsels and wakeful vigilance, and a mother's "tender care," holy example, and fervent prayers, are not employed in training the rising mind.

A heathen *family*, in a vast majority of cases at least, is any thing but a band of loving, confiding, happy associates. With pride, haughtiness, and cruelty on the part of the father ; with the most abject ignorance and servility, and often gross vice on the part of the mother ; with ungoverned habits and passions among the children ; how many sources are found of domestic wretchedness ! And when the dark clouds of adversity gather over them, how are their sorrows multiplied ! Where is consolation for the mourner ? Who waits by the sick-bed with tender assiduity ? Who venerates old age, and with long-suffering kindness seeks to relieve its sorrows and dispel its gloom ? And that dying bed—who stands there to wipe away the dew of death, and pour the sweet consolation of the gospel on the dying heathen's soul ?

Christianity sheds a most benign influence

over all the scenes of domestic life. It explains the various relations of human society, and enforces the various duties pertaining to them. It makes a father, a mother, husband, wife, child, brother, sister, even every member of the family and domestic circle, contribute each to the amount of social happiness. It binds them all together in the bonds of harmony and love.

But paganism, how little does it know of scenes like these!

CHAPTER IX.

Condition and Treatment of Females in Heathen countries.

THE female sex were not consigned by their Creator, to a condition of debasement and servitude. They were made of "one blood" with men, and their station in life is that of man's endeared and beloved companion and associate. Their province in the constitution of human society is one of vast importance to the welfare of mankind. The sphere in which they move, though different in respect to its appropriate duties from the other sex, is not less important as it respects the great interests of the human family. But their condition among the heathen, is the melancholy reverse of what the constitution of nature indicates, and what the Holy

Scriptures expressly teach. Humanity weeps at the melancholy picture of female debasement, which is to be witnessed in pagan countries.

The condition of heathen females is most deplorable. Their first entrance into the world, is marked with contempt and cruelty. In some pagan countries, it is regarded as a disgrace to become the parent of a female child. And the mother, knowing by her own sad experience the miseries entailed upon her sex, readily assents to its destruction, and often destroys it with her own hands. "I would to God," said a South American Indian mother, "that my mother, by my death, had prevented the distresses I endure, and have yet to endure as long as I live. What kindness can we show to our female children, equal to that of relieving them by death, from such oppression, a thousand times more bitter than death. I say again, would to God, my mother had put me under ground the moment I was born."* From infancy upward to mature life, there is no elevation or improvement of condition. They are regarded, in all pagan countries, as having been created solely to be subser-

* Cecil's Miss. Sermon.

vient to the wants and pleasures of men. The sacred books of some countries, particularly of the Hindoos, use language like this. **“In every stage of life, woman is created to obey. At first, she yields obedience to her father and mother. When married, she submits to her husband. In old age, she must be ruled by her children. During her life she can never be under her own control.”* Even in that transaction, of all others the most important to their interests and happiness, they have no choice of their own. They are disposed of by their parents, often while in early youth, without their consent, and even often without their knowledge; and often fall into the hands of those they cannot but loathe and abhor, but whose despised slaves they must be through life. *“A Hindoo female is in fact a mere animal kept for burthen and slaughter in the house of her husband.”*† *“The men regard them as slaves, and treat them on all occasions with severity and contempt. The object for which a Hindoo marries, is not to gain a companion to aid*

* Friend of India, p. 381.

† Abbe Dubois,

him in enduring the ills of life, but a slave to bear children, and be subservient to his rule.”*

The *laws and domestic regulations* of some countries, make a broad and most humiliating distinction between the women and the men. The men are denominated sacred, while the women are called common or impure. They are not suffered to eat of certain kinds of food used by men, nor sit at the same table with them, nor use the same articles of household ware under penalty of death.† “So far from receiving those delicate attentions, which render happy the conjugal state, and which distinguish civilized from heathen countries, the wife receives the appellation, *my servant*, or *my dog*, and is allowed to partake of what her lordly, brutal husband is pleased to give her at the conclusion of his repast.”‡

To this we may add, the *utter neglect with which they are treated in respect to education*.—Till modern Christian benevolence accomplished it, such a thing as a school for female youth was

* Abbe Dubois.

† Ellis’s Account, Miss. Her. 1825, p. 292.

‡ Mrs. Judson.

unknown in the heathen world. It was said, "they can make fires, cook food, wait upon their husbands if they are not instructed, and this was all they had need of knowing!" Education was regarded as something for which they were unfitted by nature. Mark the following heathenish reply to one who urged the value of women's souls. "What have females to do with schools? They do not know enough to go to heaven; but they know enough to go to hell, and let them go!"*

The *sufferings* of heathen females from various sources claim our attention. A most fruitful source arises from polygamy. The number of wives is limited only by inclination, or the ability to support them. These are, of course, all rivals of each other, equally claiming the husband's regard, and all susceptible of the ten thousand jealousies and animosities, necessarily resulting from such an order of things. There is of course, an utter destruction of domestic peace. Paganism also gives the husband the right of breaking the marriage contract at any moment, and on the slightest pretences.

* Miss. Reg.

The wife is thus turned out upon the world poor and friendless. She must provide against want as she can ; and often it is done by the practice of iniquity.

The *servitude* in which they are held, is productive of great misery. The woman is a mere slave, being regarded as fit only for every menial and degrading office. The heaviest burdens of life are imposed upon them, while the men are indulging in idleness. In some countries, they perform the labor of boatmen ; in others, all the hard labor of the field ; driving, and sometimes themselves dragging the plough and harrow. " A Jesuit missionary declares he has seen a woman and an ass yoked together to the same plough, and the inhuman husband driving and guiding his team."* Hindoo women are treated almost like beasts of burden. They may be seen daily carrying burdens of bricks, or sand, or earth, from eleven in the morning to five in the evening, under the rays of a torrid sun, which no European woman could sustain for ten minutes. All this is sustained by them, however, with far less covering than com-

* Tract, Condition of Females, &c.

mon decency requires. They may be seen, their hair white with age, in the markets and on the public roads continually, often bending under burdens beyond their strength, but half clothed, exposed to the sun and wind, and the rude gaze of every passenger.* Among the various tribes of Indians, their females carry the various burdens of travelling and the chase, and perform the various painful labors of the field. One pathetically laments, "We are dragged along with one infant at the breast and another in a basket; and though tired with a long march, we must set up all night to grind corn for our husbands. They get drunk, and in their drunkenness beat us, draw us by the hair of our heads and trample us under foot. And what have we to comfort us for slavery that has no end?" Throughout all the regions of heathenism, woman, instead of being the honored and beloved associate of man, is subjected to all the contempt and suffering consequent upon servitude.

Another source of female wretchedness is the *low estimation in which their lives are held.*

* Friend of India, No. X. p. 382.

Their lives in some countries are at the absolute disposal of the parent or husband. In the case of female children, this prerogative is exercised in the cold-blooded murder of great multitudes. "The rich and powerful in Hindoostan not unfrequently punish the females in their families, by causing them to be sown up in sacks and thrown by night into a river or well." The horrid custom of burning widows with their deceased husbands is also testimony of this. Says a writer* long resident in India, "If they observe the slightest tendency in a widow to burn herself, they never fail to prompt and encourage her to come to a full determination. And to accelerate this object, they sometimes ply her with drugs, which confuse the intellect, and make her easily submit to any thing required of her." The wretched widow is not only thus urged on to this most cruel species of self-murder, but is sometimes compelled by violence to ascend the funeral pile. As among the ancient Saxons, so now in some pagan countries, the murder of a woman is expiated by a trifling fine. And where the hand of violence does not close a wretched exis-

* Abbe Dubois.

tence, their decease is scarcely more regarded than that of a brute. Said an Hindoo to a missionary,* “If my father die, I be sorry much.” “If your mother should die, what then?” “I not much sorry. I not cry any.” “If your son should die, what then?” “I be sorry while I live.” “And if your daughter?” “I not care much.”

This is the condition of females where the gospel has not changed it. They enter life under contempt and reproach—rise up to its active scenes under most affecting circumstances of debasement and suffering—and when the earthly scene closes, they sink into the grave scarcely more regarded than the “vile worm we tread upon.”

We might conclude that their condition and treatment would operate powerfully upon their *character*. And it is indeed true, that female character in heathen countries has almost every thing to awaken pity, abhorrence, and disgust. Superstition finds them easy victims to its absurdities and cruelties. The deep ignorance in which they are involved, secures the unrestrain-

* Miss. Herald, 1831, p. 202.

ed influence of imposture. They are of course devoted to all the abominations of pagan religion. And thus a most debasing and demoralizing influence is exerted over moral character. Many heathen rites are impure, and sanction impurity; and many heathen customs compel its practice as a means of livelihood. Hence lewdness tarnishes the female character in every heathen land. The extent of this corruption, especially in India, is almost incredible.

The usual accompaniment of this vice, cruelty, is found among heathen females. In some countries they are ferocious, excelling even the men in acts of inhumanity. The gentle and tender sensibilities of the sex seem to be withered and crushed before the most fierce and hateful passions. The cruel murder of their infant offspring, which has been common in every pagan land, is a most melancholy evidence of their being "without natural affection." "I do not recollect," says Mr. Ellis, "a single female, who was a mother where idolatry prevailed, who had not embrued her hands in the blood of her offspring." A principal reason, however, for this unnatural crime, is found in that extreme state of degradation and misery which

renders children too great a burden, and which induces the idea, that their destruction is an act of humanity to them. Who can conceive the extremity of guilt and wretchedness, when "a woman can forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion upon the son of her womb."

Who can look from a Christian land on this melancholy spectacle, without deeply deploring the debasement of female character, and their numberless miseries among the heathen? Into what a frightful gulf of pollution, guilt, and wretchedness are they plunged! Let it be remembered the female was created to be an "helpmate for man;" to share and promote his happiness; to alleviate his sorrows; to shed a mild, restraining, softening influence over his character; to be his bosom companion, honored associate, and confidential friend; to share his protection and kindness; to help him on, and be helped on by him, in the journey to a better world. Think too, that as mothers, how important are their duties. The whole rising generation is trained up for life in their constant society and under their constant influence. The direction of millions of immortal minds, in the most important

and interesting period of their existence, is in their hands. And these millions are to become, in future life and in eternity, essentially what they have been made by maternal influence. Think of all this and then behold the monstrous, the abominable perversions of heathenism.

But the glorious gospel of the blessed God corrects them all. Wherever its benign influence is felt, woman rises from degradation and oppression, takes the rank and receives the consideration God designed. What do *we* not owe to the influence Christianity has had over female condition and character? Strike from existence all the blessings we enjoy, as resulting from the gospel's influence over them, in their various relations to us, and how frightful would be the vacuity! To what a miserable condition should we be reduced? And if the gospel will thus bless this fair, but now most degraded portion of our race; if it will break their oppressor's arm, and burst their bonds of ignorance and degradation; if by it, they will rise to those stations of honor, happiness, and usefulness the providence of God designed, who does not say, "let it fly on the wings of every wind and pour its light on every region of darkness!"

CHAPTER X.

Heathen ideas of a Future State.

A BELIEF in the future existence of the soul, was common among the most ancient nations. But it was early corrupted, and men's confidence in such a belief was weakened, perhaps by no cause, more than by the reasonings and disputes of various eminent philosophers in some of the renowned nations of antiquity. *It met with but little credit among the Greeks in the days of Socrates, and was generally disbelieved among the Romans toward the later periods of the empire. If such was the fact in regard to the most enlightened and civilized heathen nations the world has known, we may well suppose the

* Leland's Advan. and Necess. of Revel.

deepest darkness rested on the inhabitants of barbarous countries. In some modern heathen nations, though their number is very small, it is indeed true that there is no belief whatever of a future existence. But there is almost universally prevalent, however, some belief of the soul's immortality. There is also a belief that some kind of reward and punishment awaits men in a future world. These notions, however, as will be seen, are connected with a thousand absurdities, showing the melancholy darkness which rests upon this most important subject in the pagan world.

In some regions, the sentiment prevails, that the human soul is a spark struck off from the Deity, and after its appointed time of residence on earth is expired, returns back to its source, and is known no more, being absorbed in the divine nature. Among the former natives of Otaheit, one of the South Sea islands, it was believed that every soul was eaten by one of the gods as soon as it had left the body ; it was thus purified and itself became a god, prepared to eat others. By the natives of Ceylon it is believed, that the soul is a part of the divinity, on which account every thing that they do is a

necessary act of the Deity—and that though there will be rewards and punishments, yet at last all souls will be absorbed in the Deity again. The Japanese believe the souls of the virtuous occupy the regions of light, while the wicked wander through the air till they have expiated their sins. In various Asiatic islands, the natives have some general idea of heaven and hell, but do not consider them as places of reward or punishment. The natives of New Holland believe they shall roam through the air like birds, or return to the clouds from which they originally came.

The former views of the natives of the Georgian and Society islands were dark and terrific. They supposed that the spirit, when it left the body, was in darkness and was devoured by demons; not annihilated at once, but consumed by slow degrees, with most excruciating tortures. Hence, in dying agonies, they would often cry to their attendants, “There—there stand the demons watching for my spirit!—Oh, guard its exit!—Oh, preserve it from their grasp!”

A most prevalent notion is, that the future world resembles this in all important respects.

Accordingly, various Indian tribes, bury with the dead, provisions, their arms, articles of clothing, etc. supposing they will be needed in the next world. They believe that death is the commencement of a long journey, and if the man was good he travels in a smooth plain road, where there is no gravel or briars, and at length arrives at a land where there is plenty of game. The soul of the bad man travels through a thorny and rough road, to an unhealthy country, abounding with venomous beasts and poisonous serpents, and where there is no game. Among other pagans, who have similar views, all rewards and punishments have respect to the senses only. Paradise, in their view, is a place of sensual pleasures, of whatever can minister to the gratification of the low and base passions. It has a cloudless sky, never fading verdure, cool and refreshing fountains and rivers, delightful music, and every provision is made to gratify depraved appetites. So in the place of punishment, various bodily tortures are inflicted, the torments of excessive hunger and thirst are experienced, painful diseases are supposed to afflict the body, etc. The supposed resemblance between the future world

and the present, leads in some countries to an horrid waste of blood. In various regions of Africa, when a prince or chieftain dies, he is supposed to need attendants in the future state as he did here. Accordingly slaves, wives, and courtiers in great numbers are put to death, that they may go and wait on their deceased masters.

“Among the Chinese the anticipations of death are distressing. Their imagination has invented no fewer than ten hells; one consists of hills stuck full of knives; another of an iron boiler full of scalding water; a third is a hell of cold ice; in another, the punishment is pulling out the tongue of those that tell lies; another is a hell of poisonous serpents; in another the victim is drawn into pieces; another is a hell of blackness and darkness.”*

But there is probably no one absurdity adopted by so great a number of the heathen, as that of the transmigration of souls, or their passing into other bodies after death. This opinion prevails among a large portion of the pagan population of Asia, in numerous islands of the sea, and among various Indian tribes. They believe the soul

* Missionary Register.

has always existed, and has forever been undergoing various changes from one body to another ; that its present body in this world is only one of an innumerable series, and that after death it enters some other body. The reward of the good consists in their entering the bodies of other illustrious persons, or of noble animals, being permitted to make their own choice. The punishment of the wicked consists in their being doomed to inhabit the bodies of the meaner animals, as apes, serpents, and reptiles.

The facts now presented furnish us with specimens of heathen notions of futurity. They furnish some important suggestions.

1. The immortality of the soul seems to be one of those laws which the Creator has *caused to be "written on the heart."* The human mind cannot be satisfied with the cheerless doctrine of annihilation. It is found every where grasping after future existence. It starts back with horror at the idea of utter extinction, and will catch even at straws, will adopt the most absurd and extravagant fancies of futurity, rather than embrace the gloomy doctrine of the soul's ceasing existence.

2. Heathen notions of a future world, *can exert little or no salutary influence on the character and conduct.* Where rewards and punishments have any show of reason and fitness, they have no authority, they are mere traditions, they are but vague conjectures. They cannot, therefore, press solemnly upon the conscience and bind the heart. But in most cases, their ideas of future retribution directly and powerfully encourages vice and crime. Among a large class of the savage heathen, those actions which involves the most atrocious inhumanity, are regarded as making heaven certain. Among a still larger class, the grossest impurities and the most revolting abominations ensure divine approbation; and the heaven in prospect is one of sensual indulgence. Thus by the monstrous perversions of heathenism, the dark and awful future, so suited to alarm and restrain, through depraved imagination, is made to minister to vice and corruption.

3. *How subversive of human happiness in this world are pagan nations of the future.* Suppose a Christian community to make the exchange. Let pagan views become ours. A sensual paradise is promised; just the expedient to set every

hateful lust on fire. Licentiousness meets an heavenly reward; the certain means of its universal encouragement. Disgusting religious rites meet with divine favor; and they are seen in revolting profusion on every side. The sacrifice of children—severe bodily tortures, or self-murder, is supposed to be approved by the Deity; and these cruel abominations reign on every hand. What a flood of misery would such a change pour upon a peaceful and happy Christian community. But just such miseries and vices constantly prevail in heathen lands, and are constantly encouraged by deplorable delusions respecting the future world.

4. *How loud the appeal from this view of heathen darkness and misery, for the blessed gospel.* Beyond a doubt, in the minds of vast multitudes of the heathen, the anxious inquiry is made, “What shall be hereafter, and how shall we be disposed of in the coming world.” The vain imaginings of dark and besotted minds do not satisfy them. To these they do indeed cling; but it is for want of something better. See them as they finish their probation and approach “the silent solemn shore” of eternity. How silent and how solemn to them! A dark cloud

hangs over the unknown sea. Embark they must. To sail—where? and encounter—what? Oh, who would not pant for the blessedness of standing by that pagan's dying bed, and opening the blessed gospel, to preach to him Jesus and the resurrection! “Did I hold in one hand a diamond, with which I might purchase the world, and in the other a Bible, and could I catch a single glance at the things which are unseen and eternal, that glance would constrain me to cast away the one as dross, while I would carry the other to the sick man's chamber, or the couch of the dying, or to the dark dwelling of some heathen, (I care not where he dwells,) and there would I spread before him a treasure, which, with the blessing of God, is sufficient to save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins.”*

* Rev. A. Peters' Speech before the Am. Bible Soc.

CHAPTER XI.

Prospects of the Heathen for Eternity.

WE come now to the contemplation of a subject of the utmost solemnity and importance. It is one in which the serious mind cannot but feel a deep and lively interest. Whither are the benighted millions of the pagan world hastening? This mighty river is rolling onward, and pouring itself into eternity, and what is its destiny? Immortality is stamped on every pagan mind. Some where and in some sort of condition, it will exist through endless duration. The question before us is, What will that condition be?

It would be delightful to believe that no dark cloud hung over their future prospects. And so it would be pleasant to imagine there were

no miseries among men in the present world. But our pleasing fancies are but fancies still. We are to open our eyes to fact. And as the question before us respects the condition of men beyond the grave, we must seek instruction of Him who knows what shall be hereafter. Turning away from all the "vain imaginings" of men, making no account of what might be the benevolent desires of our own minds, let us seek in the word of God, our only infallible guide, the solution of the question before us.

1. *The Scriptures state with great plainness and distinctness what kind of moral character qualifies for heaven, and with equal distinctness declare that none but its possessors can inherit eternal life.* They contain the broad and unqualified declaration that "without holiness no man can see the Lord," Heb. xii. 14. And this requirement is represented as having its foundation in the very nature of the divine character. "Be ye holy, for I am holy." 1 Peter, i. 16. And therefore, there can be no compromise, no possible alteration of the terms on which heaven is to be attained. And what holiness is, is so described in the Scriptures that there is no possibility of deception. The following are various

exhibitions of it in human character. "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, kindness ; bowels of mercies, humbleness of mind, crucifixion of the flesh with its affections and lusts, laying aside all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, putting away all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, with all malice, forgiving one another in love ; with that charity which hopeth all things and endureth all things, and by which the soul is filled with all the fruits of righteousness." The possession of qualities like these, constitutes holiness, or moral fitness for heaven. The heathen do not possess these qualities. They did not when the above description was written by inspiration. And that they do not now, let the facts presented in this volume testify. Their character is the complete reverse. The inference, that they cannot see the Lord, is a necessary one ; it is founded on a principle laid down by God himself.

2. *The Scriptures also, with equal plainness, describe the character which ensures its possessor eternal misery.* They give a long catalogue of the sins of those who are under the displeasure of God, such as " idolatry, uncleanness, lascivi-

ousness, hatred, envyings, wrath, malice, strife, seditions, covetousness, drunkenness, murders, revellings," &c.; and those exposed to divine wrath are described as "covenant-breakers, without natural affection, being filled with all unrighteousness, implacable, unmerciful, whose throat is an open sepulchre, whose tongues use deceit, under whose lips is the poison of asps, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness, whose feet are swift to shed blood, in whose ways is destruction and misery, who know not the way of peace, and have no fear of God before their eyes." This is the kind of character that involves everlasting banishment from the presence of the Lord. The Scriptures pronounce the often repeated and solemn decision, that they that do such things cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Now look abroad over the heathen world. Survey moral character as developed in every land of paganism; and you will find all those abominations there. The heathen do just such things as are above described; and take pleasure in them that do them. How then can we escape the melancholy conclusion that they will be excluded from heaven. God himself lays down the principle that such

and such traits of character shut heaven against their possessor ; we find large numbers of our race possessing them, and what possible evasion can there be of the necessary inference that against them the gates of heaven will be shut. If it be true that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness, if an unholy character does render heaven unattainable, then the heathen cannot be saved.

3. *And this necessary inference is distinctly stated in the word of God.* Rom. ii. 12. "For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law." The circumstance of their not having the moral law fully revealed to them, will not exempt them from condemnation, because it does not exempt them from guilt. They "*sin without law.*" They will be judged by the measure of light they do enjoy, and refusing to follow that, must "*perish.*"

4. *The heathen are every where represented as sinners, and they must be treated as such.* The primitive converts from heathenism are addressed as those who had been the "*servants of sin ;*" and all those vices and crimes, which constitute men sinners in the sight of God, are laid to the charge of the heathen. And if they are sinners,

then are they exposed to every thing God has threatened against sinners. "But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doeth evil, upon the Jew first, and *also upon the Gentile.*" Rom. ii. 8, 9.

5. These Scriptural views of the melancholy prospects of the heathen for eternity, *are confirmed by the conduct of the Apostles.* On no supposition, but the one now before us, can we account for the course they pursued. What eagerness to spread the glad tidings of the gospel! What a ready renunciation of every temporal comfort and advantage! What a cheerful and resolute endurance of persecution in every appalling form! By sea and land they pressed onward—to civilized and barbarous countries, to the palace and the cottage, to the prince and the peasant, did they carry the same message. All men every where, they warned "night and day with tears," beseeching them to be reconciled to God. They threw their whole energies of body and soul into this great enterprize. And we are to remember they were not men, who were liable to be the sport of every wind.

They were men who were "filled with the Holy Ghost;" concerning whom it had been a matter of prophecy, that they should be "guided into all truth." Their conduct in respect to the heathen can be accounted for on no other supposition than their belief of their danger of perdition. They acted like mad men if the heathen were in no danger. But it is most manifest, that they believed them hastening to eternal death. They saw them practicing every thing abhorrent to an holy God. They witnessed every where, and among all classes, abominable idolatries, impurity in every disgusting form, deceit, cruelty, treachery, rapine, and violence; every thing that defileth and disqualifies for heaven. The awful annunciation of the Almighty was continually ringing in their ears, "they that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Gal. v. 21. They acted like men who saw the gathering of a tremendous storm—who heard the thunder's distant roar, and saw the lightning's vengeful flash; and who were willing to abide the terrors of any temporal evil to rescue men from the approaching tempest of eternal wrath. These men must

have believed God had threatened endless wo against the heathen.

6. *There is, as it were, written upon our heart, an innate involuntary conviction of the guilt of the heathen.* Let a troop of savages burst in upon a defenceless, peaceful village in the darkness of midnight; let them carry on their horrid work of desolation till every throat was cut, and every house was burned, and whose voice would be heard palliating and defending them on the ground of ignorance of right and wrong? Or who would stay the bloody hand of justice on such a plea? Look at this heathen uttering an unblushing falsehood, and behold that, committing an atrocious perjury—see this, burn incense to a wooden god, and ask it to heal his body and save his soul, and see that, committing vile acts of impurity as rites of religious worship—look on these scenes and the ten thousand other abominations of the heathen, and see if you can extort from your own mind the declaration, those rational beings know no better, they are not to be blamed, and are in no danger of a righteous God's displeasure! The law, written on our hearts, corresponds to that written on theirs, and proclaims to them that do such things tribulation and anguish.

Against the conclusion to which the above views of divine truth necessarily urge us, it will be alleged, that the idolatrous practices of the heathen are the result of their unavoidable ignorance, that they do according to the best of their knowledge, and that it cannot therefore be supposed they are in danger of destruction.

1. *The Bible denies this alleged ignorance, and declares the heathen sin against knowledge.* It affirms that "that which may be known of God is manifest in them, [i. e. his works,] for God hath showed it to them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are *clearly seen*, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." Rom. i. 19, 20. Here it is declared that the works of God display his character; it may be "*clearly seen*" in them if men will not wilfully turn away their eyes. And the inference drawn from this position is just, so then the worshippers of false gods "*are without excuse.*" "When they *knew* God they glorified him not as God." And the whole account given in this chapter of heathen departures from God represents them as sins against knowledge, as resulting from a voluntary preference of dark-

ness to light, and of sin to obedience and holiness. "Who *knowing* the judgment of God, (that they which commit such things are *worthy of death*,) not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." Rom. i. 32. Thus does the word of God, in the most emphatic manner, deny that the heathen sin ignorantly.

2. *The heathen themselves, great numbers of them at least, are conscious of their folly and wickedness.* They "show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another." Rom. ii. 15. They have, therefore, a measure of light; there is a "law written on their hearts;" it is inscribed on every pagan heart by the finger of God; it is a rule of duty embracing the great principles of the moral law, though less clearly revealed. Their conscience approves their conduct when correspondent with this law, and accuses when it is violated. The confessions of the heathen show the truth of these statements. A pagan of distinction among his countrymen remarks,* "At a very early age I was employed by my father to perform various

* Miss. Reg.

offices in an idol temple. I hardly remember the time when my mind was not exercised on the folly of idolatry. These idols, I thought, were made only by the hand of man—can move from one place to another only by man—and whether treated well or ill, are unconscious of either. So affected was I once, by these considerations, that instead of placing the idols according to custom, I threw them from their pedestals, and left them with their faces in the dust.” How certain is it, that the reflections of that youth, have arisen in the minds of thousands and tens of thousands in similar circumstances. Here was conscience, here was the power of that “law written on the heart,” and who does not believe that an honest, conscientious, and persevering compliance with its dictates, would have made that youth, one that feared God, wrought righteousness, and in acceptance with his Maker? A Brahmin had cut his throat in sacrifice to his idol. To a missionary, who exposed this folly and wickedness, the standers by replied, “truly we are in darkness, and this Brahmin,” pointing to the corpse, “must have been a great fool to cut his throat before his god, for now none of

the gods can join it again." Here was an open and frank confession of the folly and absurdity of idol worship.

And they are no less conscious of the guilt of various sins. In conversation with a missionary an Hindoo said, "I know it is bad to be angry. I know if I not steal, lie, cheat, nor get drunk, and pray to God, I be happy. If I be bad, I not be happy." Facts like those now stated, might be greatly multiplied. And they show that the heathen have conscience to "accuse or excuse;" that they have knowledge of the great principles of right and wrong; that they sin against a measure of light; that they are aware, to some extent, of their folly and wickedness. And who then can deny they are in danger of the just and eternal displeasure of God?

Let it be distinctly understood, that the ground of their condemnation is not their rejection of Christ. They cannot be to blame for not believing on one of whom they have never heard. But their condemnation is founded on the crimes and abominations with which they are actually chargeable. Their voluntary preference of a sinful course of life instead of that pointed out to them by the light they do enjoy, has stamped

their characters with guilt, and rendered them morally unfit for the kingdom of God. They violate the "law written on their hearts;" for this they justly perish. Rejection of Christ will form no part of the charge the judgment day will bring. But there is guilt enough without this, to involve them in eternal ruin.

But do none that live and die in heathenism obtain heaven? Are they all, without exception, swept away into eternal wo? I make no such assertion. I am ready to admit that there may be some, who so far follow the light they do enjoy, as to fear God and work righteousness, that some may be so enlightened by the Spirit of God, that they feel their need of an atonement for their sins, and trust in divine mercy for pardon and salvation. Far be it from me to declare, that among the innumerable millions of the heathen, not one gropes his way to God, not one has his dark mind enlightened from above, not one experiences the interposition of divine mercy. But the fearful truths of the Scriptures and a most melancholy array of facts compel the conclusion that such cases are rare. The great body of the heathen do unquestionably die in all their unforgiven guilt and pollution. Scripture and fact forbid us to believe otherwise.

But these are hard sayings. Inspiration and the moral state of the pagan world testify, however, to their truth. On this point our appeal is to the "law and the testimony." Gladly would it be admitted, if it were true, that heathenism involved no future and eternal evil. Gladly would we believe that every heathen's death bed was one of hope and peace; that they entered their graves "each one walking in his uprightness;" and that every one of them had "part in the resurrection of the just." But with the word of God in our hands, and the abominations of the heathen spread out before us, we cannot, we dare not believe this. We should "change the truth of God into a lie."

Let the melancholy conclusion to which we must come respecting the eternal prospects of the heathen, make a deep and abiding impression upon every heart. What a solemn appeal does their condition make to the sympathies of every benevolent mind! Does the dark cloud of the divine displeasure gather over them? Do their numberless abominations unfit them for the kingdom of heaven? Are these mighty multitudes of immortal beings hastening to the pains and woes of endless ruin; hastening where the

just recompense of their guilt will be given them in the worm that never dies, and the fire that is not quenched? Oh, what a spectacle for the gaze of those that dwell in gospel lands; and into whose hands the God of mercy has committed the means, the only means of salvation to the heathen. With what heart-felt compassion should they look, from the elevation of light and privilege to which the gospel has raised them, on the people that sit in darkness. And in what nobler enterprize, more honorable or happy for them, or more acceptable to God, can they pour out prayer and wealth and every energy possessed, than in spreading through all the benighted nations of the earth the knowledge of Him, “whom to know is life eternal?”

CHAPTER XII.

Influence of the Gospel on the condition of the Heathen.

WE have now taken a brief survey of their present moral condition. I have presented some of the prominent dark shades of a most melancholy picture. But it has been but a mere outline. To fill it up, by presenting more minute details, would carry me beyond my present limits. It would require volumes to tell the whole tale of heathen abominations and miseries. Enough of the veil has been removed to make heart-sickening disclosures; sufficient to awaken heartfelt compassion for them that "sit in the region and shadow of death."

An inquiry of great interest is, what has been done for their relief? Has the Christian world

had this vast scene of pollution and wretchedness before them and done nothing to alleviate it? Has the church of God possessed the lamp of life and denied its cheering radiance to them that sit in darkness? She cannot escape the charge of unfaithfulness to her high and solemn trust. Had she laid her wealth at her Redeemer's feet, bade her sons and her daughters go forth publishing salvation, and poured forth all the energies she might have done in this great cause, long ere this every wilderness and solitary place would have been gladdened by the gospel, and every desert would have blossomed as the rose.

But now the church of God has begun to awake to her duty. Zion has heard the voice of her King, and her watchmen have borne from Him the message, "Arise, shine, for thy light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee, And Gentiles shall come to thy light and Kings to the brightness of thy rising." The few of her sons, who have gone to the heathen, have told the sad tale of their moral condition. With "thoughts that breathe and words that burn," have they plead the cause of perishing millions. And thus has a new impulse been

felt throughout a large portion of Christendom. Within thirty years, more has been done to evangelize the world than in the thirteen hundred that preceded. It will be the object of this chapter to show the success with which these efforts have been attended.

1. *Influence of the gospel on government.* Facts, disclosed in previous chapters, have shown that heathen governments were almost without exception perfect despotisms, having unlimited power over property, liberty and life, and in almost every case using that power with most disastrous effect on human happiness. The civil institutions of lands most enlightened by the gospel, show the influence it can exert in this way on human happiness. And whenever it goes into the region of heathenism, it exerts a similar influence. In many of the islands of the Pacific ocean, the gospel has been embraced by the kings and chiefs themselves, who feeling its happy influence over their own minds, employ their power to spread it among their subjects. They have in some instances made a public and solemn renunciation of idolatry. They have enacted laws, which are rigidly enforced, against murder, theft, licentiousness,

retailing ardent spirits, Sabbath breaking and gambling. Courts of justice are established, judges are appointed to administer justice according to the laws, and the trial by jury with all its advantages is enjoyed.* These rulers take part themselves in religious services; build houses of public worship; submissively and thankfully receive instruction; submit themselves most cheerfully to the Christian regulations they urge on their subjects;† and seek to spread to other islands the blessed gospel. On one occasion, a chief, in the ardor of his zeal for the spiritual good of others, proposed to go in person and carry the glad tidings to a neighboring island; and was restrained only by the necessity of his presence to the safety of the government at home.‡ Thus while “kings become nursing fathers, and their queens nursing mothers,” to Zion, Isaiah, xlix. 23, they learn to rule in righteousness and through their kingdoms are spread the blessings of salvation.

2. Influence of the gospel *on the diffusion of knowledge*. . Mental degradation almost necessarily promotes and sustains moral debasement.

* Ellis' Account, Miss. Herald, 1826, p. 295.

† Ellis. ‡ Miss. Reg.

Wherever the gospel has gone, it has not only revealed the darkness of the heart, but also the darkness of the understanding, and at the same time carried with it the means of removing it. Missionaries have been eminent instruments in diffusing knowledge. In this great work the press has been most diligently employed. Christian benevolence has set in motion this mighty engine in almost every land where it has sent the gospel. And it has not only sent forth the word of life, but a great variety of treatises in the various departments of human knowledge. Forty-five printing establishments are now in operation in different heathen countries. Not far from one million of books, in eleven different languages, have been issued by the presses of the American Board alone. The number of mission colleges and higher seminaries is between thirty and forty. Schools are in successful operation at every missionary station on the globe. Not less than 300,000 scholars are instructed in these schools. The missions of the American Board have 50,000 scholars. Many heathen youth have become efficient agents, by means of these schools, of diffusing knowledge among their countrymen.

The diffusion of knowledge operates most powerfully in favor of the best interests of lands that sit in darkness. It exposes the debased condition of the people, and arouses exertion to rise above it. It opens innumerable sources of happiness before unknown. It undermines the foundations of odious superstitions. In India the whole fabric of Hindoo superstition is shaken by means of the correct knowledge of astronomy imparted by the missionaries. It arouses the slumbering minds of men to serious thought and earnest inquiry. And those thoughts and inquiries, directed by those holy men who have been the means of giving this new impulse, will be turned to the great interests of eternity.

3. *The gospel has swept away absurd, impure and cruel systems of superstition and idolatry.* By revealing the character of the only true God, it has exposed the folly and wickedness of every form of idol worship, and thrown thousands of them that are no gods to the moles and the bats. And by making known the worship he requires, the impure and cruel rites of the pagan temples have been abandoned. The blood of human sacrifices does not flow on any island of the sea

where the gospel has been received. Those costly offerings once lavished on senseless idols are now freely given to spread the gospel. Festivals in honor of false gods, scenes of the grossest sensuality and often of the blackest crimes, are abandoned; are exchanged for the simple and holy rites and ordinances of the gospel. Around the famous Juggernaut of India has the light of Christianity shed such an influence, that scarce enough can be found to drag, as has been customary, the ponderous car of the idol. Cases of self-immolation, in honor of the gods, become less frequent every year. The case is now rare of an Hindoo mother, casting her child to the alligators of the Ganges. And the burning of widows on the funeral pile, through the influence of the British Government, has entirely ceased in their dominions.

Those debasing and cruel superstitions, which have bound millions in affliction and iron, are greatly softened, and many of them are entirely broken by the gospel. Charms and unlucky circumstances, and magic arts, and the ten thousand devices of the devil and his co-workers, the heathen priesthood, in many regions, are totally disregarded, and in all, where the gospel

has gone, are fast hastening to utter neglect and contempt.

4. *The gospel has introduced and established the various institutions of the Christian religion.* The sanctuary, consecrated to Jehovah, has taken the place of idol temples. The chiefs, in various islands of the Pacific, have caused large and commodious houses of public worship to be erected. The one at Lahaina, one of the Sandwich islands, is capable of seating, after the native manner, 3,000 people. In Maui, the house of God may be found in every considerable village. Even the implements of war have been employed in their construction. "The last pulpit I ascended in the Society Islands," says Mr. Ellis, "was at Rurutu, where the rails connected with the pulpit stairs were formed of warrior's spears."* In various parts of Asia, the temples of Jehovah are beginning to lift up themselves in the presence of those of false gods: and "the church-going bell" is beginning to be heard above the shouts and barbarous music of idol worshippers.

The Sabbath, too, has begun to be recog-

* Miss. Reg. June, 1826, p. 280

nized and to exert a sanctifying power. Converted heathen rulers have enjoined its observance as a part of their civil code. Vast numbers, too, have begun to "call the Sabbath a delight, and the holy of the Lord, honorable," "not doing their own ways, nor finding their own pleasures, nor speaking their own words." Isaiah, lviii. 13. Says an eye witness, "The approach of the Sabbath is anxiously awaited; and so careful are they not to infringe its duties, or defeat its object by unnecessary labors, that they prepare their food before its commencement, with more punctillious care than many in our own country, who are thought to observe it with superstitious partiality."* Says another writer, of the Society islands, "Not a fire is lighted—neither flesh nor fruit is baked—not a tree is climbed—not a canoe is seen on the waters, nor a journey performed by land, on God's holy day. Religion alone is the business and delight of these simple-minded people on the Sabbath."† At sunrise, two-thirds of the population attend a prayer-meeting conducted by the natives. And during the hours of public

* Miss. Herald, 1825, p. 42.

† Journal of Tyerman and Bennet.

worship, in neat apparel, with sobriety, and often with deep solemnity and feeling, they wait upon the Lord in his holy temple.

5. The gospel has exerted a most salutary influence *in promoting domestic happiness*. It has a promise of the life that now is, which is verified, when pervading society, and exhibiting and enforcing as it does, the duties of the various relations of life, it increases the comforts of domestic society. We have already seen the deplorable evils of domestic life among the heathen. Let us now see the gospel's influence in removing them.

One of the noblest triumphs of the gospel is to be found, in its influence on the condition of heathen females. From the lowest state of debasement, it has raised them to their appropriate sphere in human society. From servitude the most degrading, and sufferings in some countries worse than death, the gospel has delivered them; and they have become, as the Creator designed, the honored and happy companions and associates of men. The marriage relation, through heathen perversion the source of innumerable woes, has been rescued from abuse, its nature has been defined, and its important duties explained and enforced. Polygamy, that foun-

tain of domestic misery, has been abolished. The contempt of females, so cruel, and so suited to crush all the noble sensibilities of nature, has been exchanged for that affectionate confidence and regard, that sincere consideration and respect, to which their station entitles them. The precious blessings of education are freely extended to them, from which they have so long and so unjustly been deprived; and in view of all the gospel is doing for their highest welfare, well may heathen females honor it as "glad tidings of great joy." No class of earth's population are under greater obligations to its benign influence.

Intemperance, so prevalent in all its disgusting forms in heathen lands, in some of them is in a great measure stopped. The making and selling of ardent spirits is prohibited by law, and acts of drunkenness are punished as other vices and crimes. On an application of foreigners for the privilege of selling rum, the governor of Oahu, one of the Sandwich islands, replied, "To horses, cattle, and hogs, you may sell rum; but to real men, you never shall on these shores."* Temperance societies, on the

* Miss. Herald, 1832, p. 115.

principle of total abstinence, embracing large numbers of the most influential persons, are connected with most missionary stations.

The deceitful and thievish disposition, so common and so destructive of social happiness, is subdued by the gospel. The crime is punished by law in the South sea isles. But gospel principles are beginning to exert a far more powerful and effectual restraint. A young native of the South sea islands had cheated a ship-captain out of three dollars. The ship after a long absence returned. The native went on board the ship, as soon as it entered the harbor, made confession of his guilt, and restored the money. An officer of a ship had paid a native a sum of money in small pieces, of which there happened to be one too many. The piece of money was returned, with the word, that if the circumstance had happened before the introduction of the gospel, the mistake would not have been rectified.

Cruel superstitions, which have been so instrumental of debasement and wretchedness, have lost, in some cases entirely, in others almost all their influence. The tabu system

of the South sea isles, full of absurdity and cruelty, has been entirely overthrown. The system of caste, in India, suited to entail on every generation the mental and moral darkness of the past, and so terrible in its influence over those who would embrace the gospel, though formidable still, is gradually losing its power. Said a Hindoo of the merchant caste, "Ah, Sir, we are no more so prejudiced against Christianity and European customs as we were twenty years ago; and some few years hence we shall be less so. I can prove this from my own case; because I am not so superstitious as my father, and my son is not so much prejudiced as myself." The Brahmins, whose whole power is employed to sustain the odious dominion of caste, are themselves falling into disrepute. They were accustomed to go from house to house, and receive at each some gift of money or eatables, and for which they pronounced a blessing on the giver. But now they are often refused, and must hear such words as these, "Go and labor, and you will procure sufficient to maintain yourself." The gospel stops the mouths of sooth-sayers; makes diviners mad; breaks the power of charms; puts to flight the whole tribe of

conjurers and sorcerers, and relieves society of innumerable miseries thus entailed upon it.

The religious instruction of children and youth contributes greatly to domestic happiness. Instead of being cruelly destroyed, they are now cherished with tenderness and trained up for God. Says an eye witness,* “ At a public examination of the schools, I have seen a little boy, seven or eight years of age, stand upon his seat, and, before twelve or thirteen hundred people, repeat aloud chapters from the Testament, and other exercises, in a manner highly creditable to his industry and intellect. And on this scene, I have beheld his mother looking with ecstasy, unable to restrain her joyful feelings. On one of these occasions, a woman was seen weeping, and on being asked the reason, said, “ Had you come here sooner, or had God delivered us earlier from the reign of terror, (as they call idolatry,) my dear boy might have been among that sprightly throng; but he was destroyed.” A commanding object of the missionaries is, to bring, as soon as possible, the whole rising generation within their reach, under re-

* Ellis' statements, Miss. Her. 1825, p. 296.

ligious instruction. They are thus, to some extent at least, withdrawn from those polluting scenes in which they would otherwise mingle. And rise into life with the fairest prospect of being blessings to society.

I might greatly enlarge on the gospel's influence in promoting domestic and social happiness. It has done it, by introducing the various arts of civilized life ; by encouraging and enforcing sobriety, frugality, and industry ; by restraining or quenching those brutal and ferocious passions, which make such desolations among the heathen ; by discountenancing falsehood and treachery, and enforcing a sacred regard to truth ; by frowning on every species of impurity ; by inspiring mutual confidence and respect ; by teaching men a sacred regard for each other's characters and rights ; in a word, by teaching and enforcing that great principle of the divine government, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." On all these topics, I might enlarge and furnish facts in support of the gospel's blessed influence in promoting domestic happiness. But I must pass to another topic.

6. *Its influence in promoting true piety among*

the heathen. The blessings already enumerated, though unspeakably precious, may be enjoyed, many of them at least, where, after all, the heart remains the slave of sin, a stranger to the gospel's sanctifying power, and "all unfurnished for the world to come." But, while the gospel has bestowed these blessings, it has also been made the wisdom of God unto salvation. The besotted Hottentot, has not only been raised from the deepest external degradation, but from the deepest moral debasement, to most holy and precious consolations in Christ. The wanton Hindoo, has not only abandoned his disgusting impurities, but has become changed in mind and the possessor of a pure heart. The savage and ferocious cannibal of New Zealand, has not only lost his appetite for human flesh, and abandoned his brutal mode of life, but he has set himself down in meekness and love at the feet of Jesus. The debased islander of the South seas, has not only abandoned his bloody sacrifices of human victims, but joyfully hopes that "blood that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel," has "cleansed him from all sin." The Choctaw and Cherokee, have not only abandoned the sloth and profligacy of the savage state, but they have become

“ fellow citizens of the saints and of the household of God.”

Flourishing churches have been gathered at the various missionary stations throughout the world, and the number who have professed faith in Christ, is estimated at 50,000. About 1,800 belong to the churches under the care of the American Board. These hopeful converts to Christ give as credible evidence of piety as the members of any of the churches in Christian lands. They perform the duties of religion with exemplary diligence and faithfulness. In multitudes of cases, there has been a firm resistance of the most pressing temptation, a steadfast adherence to Christian principle, and an unshrinking devotion to Christ under bitter reproaches and persecutions. That they have correct views of the nature of true religion, let such facts as these testify. One of them said, “ Let us not resemble the *bamboo*, which has a smooth and polished rind, but is hollow within; let us not resemble the *raanfara*, a species of palm, which is hard and solid without, but rotten within; let us not resemble the *cocoa-nut*, that grows quickly, but soon decays; but let us resemble the *ati*, and the *miro*, and the *purau*

trees, which not only have a sound appearance, but are firm and solid throughout.”* The king of one of the Sandwich islands warned the newly baptized against resting in forms and professions of godliness, telling them they had now the *outside* of religion, the Sabbath, the sanctuary, ordinances, &c. but these, however excellent, would be of no avail, without a new heart and a right spirit within.

One of the most decisive and pleasing evidences of the genuineness of their piety, is seen in the disposition shown to extend to others the benefits of the gospel. Missionary societies for this purpose are formed on many of the islands of the Pacific. At one of these anniversaries, king Pomare said to the multitude around him, “Shall we not contribute a little of our time, and a little of what we enjoy, to cause the word of God to grow in every land?” More than two thousand naked arms were raised to signify the assent of as many generous and willing hearts. To these public meetings, come the halt, the lame, the blind, and many an aged form conducted or carried by their friends. Kings,

* Miss. Reg.

chiefs, priests, and warriors are present, and in bold and affecting strains proclaim their gratitude for the gospel they have received, and animate each other to greater interest and increased prayer for its more wide diffusion. Here they bring their offerings to the Lord's treasury. "Here," said a mother, holding out her offering, "take this for my child. I wish my child to subscribe to the missionary society, for if the mothers of Britain had not given their money to send the gospel here, my child would have been murdered." The South sea islanders have already sent teachers to the Sandwich islands on the north; to the Palliser and Marquesas islands on the east; and to the Harvey islands on the west. How soon have these natives, recently so benighted, caught the true spirit of the gospel!

And what gospel grace has done for the heathen, can be seen in the manner in which they have died, as well as in that in which they have lived. Multitudes of them have gone down into the dark valley of the shadow of death, exclaiming, "Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory?" King Pomare exclaimed, as he breathed his last, "I am happy;" an exclamation no one of his

benighted countrymen had probably ever made before him in a dying hour. Said a dying Cherokee convert, "When I remember what my Saviour has done for me, I say it is well. We shall not be long parted. I feel that I shall soon follow him, and that my Saviour will take me to himself forever." The expiring Karaimoku, a Sandwich islands chief, after a life of consistent piety, remarked, "This world is full of sorrow, but in heaven there is no sorrow nor pain; it is good, it is light, it is happy!" A dying New Zealand chief said, "Oh, my heart is very full of light, because of my belief in Jehovah and in Jesus Christ. I have no fear of death. I shall go to sit above the sky with Jesus Christ."

My limits forbid dwelling any longer on this delightful theme. What has the gospel done for the heathen? I reply, within the last thirty years, in some nations, their whole idol system has been swept away. In other kingdoms, it has so weakened these systems, that the heathen themselves predict their speedy ruin. It has so tamed the ferocity of numerous savage tribes, that they have beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. It has broken in pieces some of the

most iron-hearted despotisms that have ever scourged our race. It has given, in their place, forms of civil government, which are a terror only to evil doers. It has erected hundreds of temples of the living God, and from them poured on the surrounding darkness the glorious light of truth. It has raised whole communities from the most disgusting, brutal, and miserable degradation, to intelligence, sobriety, social order, and domestic happiness. It has introduced the improvements of Christian countries, of every kind promotive of man's best welfare, and by them vastly augmented human happiness. It has exerted its sanctifying power over thousands, inspiring the hatred and renouncement of sin, and the love and practice of holiness. It has furnished the miserable with its precious consolations, and the dying with its triumphant hopes. It has fulfilled the glorious prophecies of God's word. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." Isaiah, xxxv. 1. "And the gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Isaiah, lx. 3. "He shall come down as rain upon the mown grass, and as showers that water the

earth." Psalms, lxxii. 6. "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him." Psalms, lxxii. 10, 11. And the triumphs already won by the gospel, inspires the blessed hope, that the day is rapidly approaching, when all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

"The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
Shout to each other; and the mountain tops
From distant mountains, catch the flying joy;
Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round."

CHAPTER XIII.

Objections to sending the Gospel to the Heathen considered.

IN view of the various considerations presented in previous chapters, it might safely be presumed many, if not all of my readers, would approve, with all their hearts, of the missionary enterprize. The generous sympathy of their minds would lead them to believe that not one word could be said against it. But the missionary cause, so fraught with temporal and eternal good to man, has nevertheless numerous and bitter opposers. A host of objections is raised, and in some communities they are spread with great industry and success. The minds of many are poisoned. And the antidote not being at hand, the prejudice is never removed, and those under

its influence either stand aloof or oppose all missionary operations. These objections are unfounded. My present object is to show this.

1. “ *The Heathen are happy without the gospel; why then take so much pains to send it to them?* ” That they are deprived of every kind of enjoyment in this world, none would affirm. The sun shines pleasantly upon them, and their fields yield their increase. In the use of the various bodily and mental faculties, and in the exercise of social affections, they are by no means without enjoyment. Nor is the slave at the oar. He may enjoy his food, and in an hour of hilarity may sing a merry song. But would not emancipation elevate his condition and vastly increase his happiness? And would not the gospel send through all the regions of heathenism such a tide of enjoyment as never rolled there before? The question is not, whether they have not some degree of happiness now, but whether it could not be greatly increased, by rescuing them from their present degradation as the gospel proposes.

But there is a kind of happiness to which the heathen are utter strangers. That sweetest and noblest of all enjoyment, in comparison with

which none other deserves the name, the holy enjoyment of an holy God, the blessedness of an enlightened and approving conscience, peace in believing and joy in the Holy Ghost; in respect to all this the soul of a heathen is a perfect blank. Of spiritual enjoyment they have none. They are not happy in the only proper sense of that word as it respects an immortal soul. And they never can be without the gospel.

2. "*The Heathen are safe for eternity. Their worship is sincere, though absurd and foolish. They serve God according to the best views they have of him, and it cannot be supposed they will be finally cast off.*" "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are *clearly seen*, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are *without excuse*; because that, when they *knew* God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful." Rom. i. 20, 21. Here is a flat contradiction of the position that the heathen err through ignorance. They *knew* God, and were without excuse for not glorifying him. And as for sincerity in doing wrong, it can clear no man's skirts of guilt. If plead by any class of the vicious and abandon-

ed, the justification would be received with universal and deserved scorn.

In Paul's Epistle to the Romans, the danger of the heathen is founded on their guilt, their unfitness for heaven. And they are essentially in the same condition now. "Every sin," says a missionary, "enumerated, in Rom. i. 18—32, is literally committed without a blush, and without any apparent remorse." Such debasement of character would exclude its possessor from the society of the respectable in civilized and Christian countries. Would it not from the holy joys of heaven? The safety of the heathen for eternity is an unfounded assumption. It is utterly repugnant to reason, and directly contradicted by the word of God. [For a more extended discussion of this point, see chapter on the future condition of the heathen.]

3. "*God can take care of the heathen without us.*" So he could of any heathen city Paul visited, and he might have gone on with his tent-making and let them alone. He might have taken care of Nineveh without Jonah, and this reasoning would have helped the reluctant prophet, if he had thought of it, in endeavoring to quiet his conscience and get rid of duty. God

could have taken care of all the ancient heathen, and the apostles were officious meddlers on the supposition before us, to warn them of their danger and urge them to Christ.

What God *can* do, is not the rule by which we may judge what we *ought* to do. God can rescue that sinking, shrieking, drowning child; are we thereby excused from hastening to its relief? He can feed, and clothe, and educate our children; have we, therefore, no duties to perform in respect to them? He can give bread to the hungry, and raiment to the naked, and publish his own gospel through the world. But none of these things are done by him. He has committed them to us. This responsibility we must feel, and the duties of it we must discharge. And he who would hide from his duty under the pretence now named, will find at the judgment, if not before, "that the bed is shorter than a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it."

4. "*We have heathen enough at home; let them be reformed first, and then we may look abroad.*" Are there heathen temples in our land consecrated to idolatry and impurity? Are

there gods of wood or stone found in our habitations, or staring upon us at the corners of our streets? Let us see the funeral pile and the deluded widow rushing into its flames; point us the altars where the blood of human sacrifices is shed; show us the mothers that fling their offspring to sharks and crocodiles; the children that drag their infirm parents into the wilderness to perish by want; point us to such scenes of madness and folly, such scenes of lust and cruelty, such odious abominations as are to be witnessed every day in heathen lands; present such spectacles, and then it will be admitted there are heathen here.

That there are immense multitudes in Christian lands, who need repentance and newness of life, who live without God and without hope, is indeed a melancholy fact. But their condition of guilt and danger is in consequence of a voluntary refusal to yield to that gospel, which is most solemnly and earnestly urged on their attention. And shall an infallible remedy for the disease and misery of sin, prevailing all over the world, be confined to a single region till all are healed by it, while the only reason why they are not healed, is their obstinate refusal to use it?

Shall a single city keep within its walls a sovereign remedy for the plague till every obstinate and resisting patient is cured, while the whole country is desolated by the scourge? *They* did not act upon this principle, who were first commissioned to preach the gospel. The refusal of the Jew was followed by the prompt annunciation, "Lo, we turn unto the Gentiles." Acts, xiii. 46. Shall the saving grace of the gospel be withheld from the perishing millions of other lands, merely to wait the repentance of those who have a thousand times despised it?

5. "*The time has not come for sending the gospel to the heathen.*" That is, the law of love to our neighbor is not obligatory upon us, merely because his miseries call loudly for relief; its obligation is dependent on some future and perhaps far distant, vague, uncertain exigency of human affairs. It will bind us only when the circumstances of our world shall have undergone some great change, perhaps a hundred generations hence. Can this be a correct exposition of the law of love?

Are we ever authorized to give this chilling

rebuke to any of the sons or daughters of sorrow? Send that starving beggar from your door with this reply, and conscience would become a whip of scorpions. Has not the time come for relieving the miserable, when, knowing their wretchedness, we have the means of relief, and can apply them? Paul's time was come with the hour that put perishing sinners within the reach of his alarming or inviting voice.

But what is the evidence, distinct and direct, that the time has come to send the gospel to the heathen? "There stood a man of Macedonia and prayed him saying, Come over and help us." Acts, xvi. 9. Just such an appeal is now rung in the ears of all Christendom, not only from the woes and miseries of heathen lands, but also from the lips of hundreds and thousands who begin to feel their need of the gospel. "Send me teachers," says a prince of Lattakoo, in South Africa, "and I will be a father unto them." "In New Zealand," says a missionary, "almost all the tribes are inviting us, nearly in the language of the Macedonian of old, 'come over and help us.' The heathen from the interior of India say, 'Sir, we have seen a writing that tells us about an eternal God.

Are you the man that gives away such writings ? If so, pray give us one ; for we want to know the truth before we die.' Others on the borders of Siam and China say, ' We have heard there is an eternal hell. We are afraid of it. Give us a writing that will tell us how to escape it.' " And the missionaries from every region of heathenism send back earnest and imploring appeals for more help. " Say not ye, there are yet four months and then cometh the harvest. Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields ; for they are white already to harvest." John, iv. 35. By the light already thrown on their condition, the heathen are beginning to see its wretchedness, and they ask for pity and relief. Systems of degrading and cruel superstition are already relaxing their influence, and need only the well-directed energies of faithful men, to crumble into ruin. There never was a time when the kingdom of darkness in heathen lands could be more successfully assailed, when the moral power of the gospel could be employed against it with more glorious success, than the present hour. The time has come ! The denial has not a shadow of support.

6. "*The missionary enterprize has hitherto*

been a failure, and the want of success proclaims the whole scheme chimerical." Suppose it were so. Make the most of this objection. Suppose that in spite of all the energies of missionary enterprize, exerted for half a century, all the heathen were still "mad upon their idols;" that not a ray of spiritual light had as yet broken in upon the darkness of one benighted mind; that gospel grace had amended no pagan's life, and had cheered no pagan's dying bed; not a temple had fallen, not an idol had been demolished; that at the present hour, heathen abominations in all their madness and folly held the same dominion they had done for a thousand generations. Grant it all. Still the command of Christ remains our unalterable rule of duty. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark, xvi. 15. This command must be obeyed. The question of failure or success does not affect our duty. Millions of our race have never yet heard a solitary sound of the gospel. To them it must be borne, or Christ be disobeyed.

But this objection has no foundation in fact.* The missionary enterprize so far from being a

* See Chapter XII.

failure, has demonstrated its own practicability at every step of its history. In some cases the progress of the gospel has indeed been slow, as it respects visible results. But even here, the foundations of mighty fabrics of superstition and idolatry have been undermined, and the train been laid for the production of mighty moral revolutions. But in other cases, the gospel has triumphed far beyond the most sanguine hopes. Its power to raise men, even whole nations, from the deepest moral debasement and misery, to holiness and happiness, has been shown by success, which has awakened wonder and joy in earth and heaven. And every report from the heathen world proclaims new triumphs, and repels the insinuation that missionary effort is spent for naught.

7. "*Funds given to missionary objects are wasted, are consumed by agents, officers, etc. and very little reaches its destination.*" Those intrusted with the benevolent operations of our country, are persons of the first respectability, of tried and acknowledged worth, are professed disciples of Christ, are most ardent friends of the missionary cause, and make most self-denying efforts to promote it. They regard the cause as

God's, and every dollar given to it as sacred charity. They are pledged by every thing that can bind the conscience to be faithful. Unfaithfulness would be the worst species of perjury. It would be abominable sacrilege. The character of these men utterly forbid the supposition.

But the waste of those funds is impossible on another ground. Missionary operations are carried on in the open view of the whole community. Receipts are given for every dollar contributed, and a monthly, quarterly, or annual statement is made of the manner in which these funds have been expended. These reports are spread in every direction over the whole country, and every person disposed can examine them for himself. Fraud is impossible. Waste and extravagance could not be committed without the notice of a thousand eyes, and the prompt remonstrance of a thousand tongues.

It must not be forgotten, that this objection is confessedly rarely heard from any other quarter than where opposition is felt toward the whole system of benevolent effort. Those, and those only make it, who stand entirely aloof—who give nothing and who do nothing. While by those who embark property, talent, and deep moral

feeling in the cause, and who, of course, would feel the deepest interest in its faithful management, this objection is never made.

I have now stated and answered the prominent objections which are made against the cause of missions. Others of smaller notoriety might probably be hunted up; but the game is not worth the chase. The ignorant, the prejudiced, the covetous, and the cold-hearted, will each have their modes of assault upon this precious cause. It is not necessary to ferret them out, and answer them all. The ploughman cannot stop to brush off every fly. Suffice it to say, the missionary cause stands upon the eternal rock, the foundation which God himself has laid. And all the assaults of opponents are like the rush of the ocean's waves against the iron-bound shore.

CHAPTER XIV.

Motives for sending the Gospel to the Heathen.

1. *It is the express command of our Lord Jesus Christ.* "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark, xvi. 15. This command lays upon the followers of Christ the indispensable obligation of extending the blessings of his kingdom to all who do not enjoy them, in every part of the world. This command was indeed originally addressed to the ministers of Christ, and so far as the act of preaching is concerned, it is specially binding upon them. But how shall they go except they be sent? How shall they reach the heathen, and how be sustained, so as to devote themselves to this great work, without the aid of their fellow Christians? The com-

mand in question as much involves the means necessary to its execution, as it does the result. And if it be the duty of the Christian church to see that the gospel is preached to every creature, it is as much its duty, and as really a divine command, to furnish the requisite means. And those that have the means, of whatever kind required, are solemnly bound to make cheerful offerings to this holy service.

This command admits of no evasion or compromise. It is an expression of the divine will, and can no more justifiably or safely be disregarded, than the law requiring love to God or our neighbor. We have nothing to do with the question of success. Whether the heathen will receive the gospel or not, is a matter of their own responsibility. It is ours to see that the command of Christ is obeyed.

2. *The law of love to our neighbor* involves the duty now urged. "Therefore all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Matt. vii. 12. Whatever of kindness, compassion, or relief, men could reasonably desire and ask of others, let them be ready to bestow. This precept lays us under obligation to all the sons and daughters of

sorrow that can be reached by our kindness. And who of earth's inhabitants, we may ask with solemn emphasis, are more needy, more truly objects of our compassion, than those that dwell in pagan darkness? If temporal miseries can awaken compassion, on this ground we must pity the heathen. But their spiritual wants and miseries make a far more solemn and earnest appeal. They are utter strangers to the precious consolations and the glorious hopes of true religion. Their guilt exposes them to eternal ruin. Now if the law of love commands us to feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, does it not most solemnly urge us to bestow relief on the naked, starving, perishing souls of them that sit in darkness? If this law enforces any obligation, it bids us send the gospel to the heathen.

3. *The performance of this duty is an indispensable testimony of our gratitude for the gospel.* This is God's unspeakable gift. Without it, what should we have been but dwellers in the deepest heathen darkness? It is our richest present consolation, and our eternal hope! Our obligations to God for it are unmeasurable. And we are bound, in all suitable ways, to express our sense of the benefit received. And one of

the most natural and reasonable ways of doing this is, by pouring on others the light that has guided us to God. Can a man be possessed of warm-hearted thankfulness for the gospel, if, having it in his power, he has no disposition to send it to the destitute? What sense of obligation does the shipwrecked mariner feel, who, having been rescued himself from impending death, will not afford his preserver a particle of aid in rescuing his drowning companions?

4. *This duty is urged, on the ground that its performance is essential to satisfactory evidence of piety.* Piety implies sensibility to the woes of others, and a disposition to relieve them. It implies abhorrence of sin and a desire for its universal extermination; a love of holiness and a desire for its universal prevalence; a desire that the true character of the blessed God should be every where known and loved, that his beloved son, our Saviour, be every where glorified by the extension of his kingdom and the salvation of souls. All this is implied in the spirit of piety.

But to refuse to aid in spreading the gospel, on the part of those who have been in any tolerable measure enlightened, involves a state of

moral feeling totally unlike the mind that was in Christ Jesus. It involves such a disregard for the glory of God, such an indifference to the honor of Christ, such insensibility to the temporal and eternal wretchedness of men, as should lead such a mind seriously to question whether it has ever felt the power of true religion. Is there not a manifest contrast between such a temper of heart and the spirit of true piety as displayed in the Holy Scriptures?

5. *In the discharge of this duty we follow the most illustrious examples in a most glorious work.* Our blessed Lord himself was a missionary from heaven. He came to alleviate human wretchedness; "to seek and to save that which was lost." Those holy men, also, whom the eternal Spirit sanctified for this very purpose, stand before us as noble examples of the missionary spirit, and they brought all the energies of their natures into the work of spreading the gospel. And the noblest spirits that have acted on the theatre of life since their day, have trodden the same bright path. We may share their honors and joys by being co-workers with them.

But the work itself, in moral dignity and grandeur, how does it outshine all other en-

terprizes of men! The missionary enterprize promotes, above any other means, the most valued interests of the human family for the present world. But this is entirely subordinate. It has an infinitely nobler aim. This is no less than to qualify immortal beings for the honors and joys of their Maker's eternal favor. It is to enlighten the benighted mind of sinful man, to raise it from its deplorable moral degradation to the likeness and the love of God; and thus prepare it to shine in "the beauty of holiness," "as the stars forever and ever."

Behold that ministering spirit before the eternal throne. Behold it, radiant in purity and moral loveliness, as the sun in its strength. See that golden crown. Hear that rapturous song; a ransomed soul's incense to redeeming love. "In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore." Psalms, xvi. 11. The glory of the gospel is, that it prepares our sinful race for this blessed world. From among the heathen is it sending the trophies of its power to eternal glory. And we send it forth that it may exert wider and farther its redeeming influence. What enterprize compares with this in moral grandeur? And every one who

takes part in spreading the gospel shares in this glorious work.

6. *Benevolence toward the heathen ensures rich blessings to its possessor.* Such is the testimony of God. "The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." Prov. xi. 25. We know not all the ways in which Providence may make good the declaration, "there is that scattereth and yet increaseth;" but some of them are obvious. The one who deeply feels and generously gives for the relief of the heathen, will increase, by exercising it, one of the most fruitful sources of human happiness, viz. the spirit of benevolence. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Such an one will enjoy the pleasures of an approving conscience, and the satisfaction of the divine approbation. It cannot be questioned, that the spirit of missions gives life and vigor to all the graces of the Christian character, so that in this respect, without reference to any temporal benefit, the benevolent soul receives "good measure, pressed down and shaken together, and running over." The most warm-hearted piety, and the most elevated spiritual enjoyment is undoubtedly to be found among those who are

the most deeply interested in sending the gospel to the heathen.

The reaction of the missionary spirit upon churches and Christian communities has been most happy. Those churches which have been most prompt, zealous, and self-sacrificing in this cause, have enjoyed the most spiritual prosperity. At no period has the dew of divine grace descended so plentifully upon Zion as since she has been aroused to benevolent enterprize. It is now about thirty years since the spirit of foreign missions began to be excited in this country ; and during this whole period, what precious tokens Zion has enjoyed of the favor of her King ! Within this period, one benevolent institution after another has arisen ; one enterprize of Christian love has been succeeded by another still more successful ; the number of revivals and of hopeful conversions to God has been multiplied beyond all former precedent, and Zion has witnessed the accomplishment of the glorious predictions, “ Lift up thine eyes round about, and see ; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee : thy sons shall come from far and thy daughters be nursed at thy side. For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will

bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation." Isaiah, lx. 4, 17, 22. Therefore, he that watereth shall be watered himself.

VII. *Can we not find an excitement to effort in the great facilities now enjoyed for spreading the gospel?* These are now multiplied beyond all former precedent. Christian benevolence spreads her sail and plies her oar in seas never previously visited on a similar errand. The heralds of the cross tread the soil of distant islands and continents, lands that till recently never exclaimed, "how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." The channels of communication with the heathen are now so multiplied, that we can reach them in almost any part of the world. We can direct our offerings for their relief to almost any point we please, and be assured they will reach their destination. We can sit by our own fireside and light the lamp of life in the dark tabernacles of the heathen. We can furnish the wanton Hindoo with reasonings respecting "righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come." We can pour upon the mind

of the fierce and bloody New Zealander the knowledge of a "meek and lowly" and merciful Saviour. We can put the word of God into the cabin of the degraded African, and bid him read in his own tongue the wonderful works of God. The western Indian can receive from our hands an infallible account of the Great Spirit, an infallible direction in the way of life. We can scatter tracts on the banks of the Ganges, through the plains and vallies of Burmah, and in the streets of Canton. By our co-operation, we can bid the heralds of salvation lift up their voice, and the press pour out its mighty energies in almost any region of darkness. We need not leave our domestic circle, and yet make our efforts bear upon human salvation in the uttermost parts of the earth. The saints of past periods were not thus favored. With eager joy would they have grasped these glorious opportunities. We may find in them a powerful stimulus to vigorous action.

8. *The gospel carries with it the most precious temporal blessings.* As there is not a temporal interest of man that is not marred by the prevalence of heathenism, so, in respect to all these interests, does the gospel ameliorate the

condition of men. What earthly blessing can be mentioned which the gospel does not either confer, or make still richer, where it is enjoyed? Through every condition of society, through all the relations of life, in a thousand ways, does it alleviate human misery, and open a thousand before unknown sources of enjoyment. It tames the ferocious passions of men—it overthrows cruel systems of superstition and idolatry—compels men to recognize and regard each other's rights—diffuses the numberless blessings of education—introduces the arts, improvements, and comforts of civilized life—promotes among men “whatsoever things are true—honest—just—pure—lovely—and of good report.” In a word, it changes, from its foundation, the whole character of society, clothes it with a new aspect, and bestows upon it every thing that is necessary to its highest and best happiness in the present world.

9. *It is the only means of rescuing the heathen from eternal death.* “For there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts, iv. 12. We must send the heathen the gospel, therefore, because it is the only possible refuge of the

guilty soul. Here then is a motive which should press the conscience with a mountain's weight; a motive which should set on fire all the tender sensibilities of the soul; a motive which should arouse its deepest anxieties, and urge it on to the most energetic action. Who that has the gospel in his hands, and has one spark of its compassionate spirit, can fail of feeling the power of a motive so solemn and urgent as this?

10. *How can we meet the heathen in the day of judgment, if we refuse to send them the gospel?* Knowing it to be the sinner's only hope, knowing that its grace alone can qualify for heaven, knowing the heathen to be miserable and perishing without it, and having it in our power to send it to them, if we refuse, how can we escape the bitter accusations of undone millions? "You knew," I seem to hear them exclaim, "you knew our degradation and guilt, you knew the temporal and spiritual miseries under which we groaned. You knew that an 'horror of great darkness' hung over our eternal prospects. And you knew there was a remedy. It had been applied to millions like ourselves, and had given them eternal life. That remedy was in your hands. A trifling sacrifice

on your part would have brought it to our shores and poured its blessings upon our souls. But you would not do it. Had you pitied us, and sent us the gospel, we might have found mercy in this dreadful day. But now we perish, and we sink, pouring our everlasting reproaches upon you ! ” Oh, how will such language ring in the ears of those who would not pity the heathen. Let every one of my readers beware of encountering this terrible, this heart-withering rebuke. It can be escaped only by doing what God enables us, to spread the gospel through the world.

CHAPTER XV.

Concluding Remarks.

MANY interesting and important considerations, suggested by what has been presented in the foregoing chapters, press upon the writer's mind as he is about closing this little volume.

1. It is of the highest importance that every individual should have a *deep sense of personal responsibility* in respect to the world's conversion. The impression may exist, that it is a good work, that it ought to be earnestly prosecuted, and that it is somebody's duty to engage in it; while, at the same time, there is no heart-awakening sense of personal obligation, no pressing conviction of individual duty, no consciousness of responsibility urging the soul's earnest

exclamation, "Here am I, send *me*." It is this sense of personal obligation that inflames the soul with zeal. It begets restless anxiety, like his who exclaimed, "Wo is me if I preach not the gospel!" It gives no peace—it will allow no rest while the great work remains unaccomplished. To such minds, labor is pleasure, self-denial is delightful. And it is by the operations of such hearts and such hands, under God, that the glorious schemes of modern Christian benevolence are sustained.

On every one of my readers would I urge, with all solemnity and earnestness, a sense of their personal duty toward the heathen. We must not merge ourselves in the mass of community so as to lose sight of our individual characters and obligations. We do not act so in other cases. A neighbor's house in flames awakens the sympathy of every heart, and enlists the effort of every hand. How loudly should we condemn the unconcerned spectator of such a scene! Let no one forget, that in respect to relieving the woes of the heathen, there is no such thing as escaping individual responsibility, any more than a man may merge himself in the crowd, and escape recognition in the great day of account!

2. There ought to be the most entire and satisfactory conviction, *that every sincere effort will promote the great cause.* It matters not how obscure the individual—how contracted the sphere in which he moves—how small the offering, or effort, he is enabled to make; he adds a drop to the millions of others, which compose those streams of beneficence that are pouring salvation over the world. God has so ordered it, in the benevolence and wisdom of his providence, that all who wish it, may aid this cause. The little child, with its offering of a penny, is as really an efficient agent in this work of love, as the bestower of thousands. The Sabbath scholar, who prays with all his heart, “thy kingdom come,” is as really a benefactor of the world as the minister of Christ, who leads in the sanctuary, the intercessions of thousands, in behalf of the heathen. Let none, therefore, turn away, on account of the scantiness of their offerings, or the feebleness of their efforts. Mark the heathen, “He that is so impoverished that he hath no oblation, chooseth a tree that will not rot.” Isaiah, xl. 20. If they had not rich gifts, they served their false gods with those of inferior value. They would not be denied the privilege of homage of

some kind. Nor should we. A man is accepted and blessed according to what he hath. If he cannot bring the rich man's gold, let him bring the poor man's mite. They that mingle the mortar, and bring the materials together, are as really helpers in building the walls of Zion, as those who lay her foundation, or polish her corner stones.

3. Various ways in which we may co-operate in this work.

1. My dear reader, first of all, give YOURSELF, body and soul, a living sacrifice to God. Make this required, this essential sacrifice, make it in the joyful sincerity of your soul, and you will then have taken a most important preparatory step to usefulness in this great work.

2. Make it a matter of conscience to become *thoroughly acquainted* with the condition of the heathen, and the state and progress of benevolent effort on their behalf. Though multitudes are ignorant, none ought to be, of these great subjects; and none need be. The various missionary publications of the day will furnish all needed information. There can be no intelligent, well-directed effort in this cause without knowledge. Moreover, the journals of those now

among the heathen, besides furnishing most valuable information respecting manners, customs, soil, productions, scenery, &c. afford a rich spiritual repast to those whose hearts are warm in the work of missions. They are in fact among the most precious means of grace.

3. *Pray fervently* for the salvation of the heathen. I need not dwell on the prevalence of prayer with God in bringing down spiritual blessings. It is the great channel of communication between the throne of the Eternal, and a perishing world. It is the divinely appointed mode of conveyance to men, of every thing which the soul needs, or for which it can hope.

Nothing will so animate the soul with love and zeal in this blessed work as fervent prayer. Nothing will so invigorate all its desires of doing good—nothing will inspire such satisfaction under self-denying labors—nothing will so ensure the mind's determined perseverance; in a word, nothing will so expand the whole soul with love to God and man, and give it so much of the very temper of heaven, as fervent prayer. And in what attitude so interesting, so pleasing to God, so correspondent to its own noble nature and destiny, can the soul ever be found as when

bowing before the eternal God, interceding for the world's salvation ?

4. Be ever ready to *contribute cheerfully and liberally*. Count it a blessed privilege, as well as a solemn duty. Be willing to practice self-denial that you may be able to do this.

5. Be ready, with meekness but yet with firmness, to *defend* the cause of missions, when assailed and reproached by opposers. The Bible is full of arguments. The New Testament is a history of missions, of missionary operations, and missionary men. Every civilized and Christian country on earth, is a spectacle of the utility of missions, being indebted to them for their most valuable blessings. And the present era of the world has been distinguished in no respect, more than by the glorious triumph of missions among the heathen. From all these sources may be drawn abundant weapons, not of defence only, but also of assault, upon the utterly untenable positions of the opposers of this cause.

In favor of earnest engagedness in this great and good work, I press, beside what has been advanced already, but two considerations.

1. *The rapidity with which the heathen are*

passing into the grave, and to the eternal world. A period of thirty years closes the probation of a whole generation. According to this estimate nearly *twenty millions* die every year; and more than *fifty thousand* leave this world every day. Were you to stand upon some lofty eminence, and see them crowding on in a mass toward the parting point, how solemn would be the spectacle! And as thousands after thousands pass the boundary and disappear, the fearful truth rings in your ears, These go before an holy and sin-hating God, with all their transgressions unrepented of and unforgiven! What an agony of compassion is awakened on their behalf! You would plead for an angel's wings, that you might fly among the dying multitudes, and for an angel's voice, that you might proclaim the gospel's glad tidings, and bid them turn their dying eyes toward "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."

But though this scene does not transpire before you, it is not the less a reality. The souls of benighted men are every moment leaving this world. While you have been perusing the page on which your eye now rests, many have uttered their dying groans, and plunged into eternity!

And with all the means of Christian benevolence now in operation, it is most melancholy to think, how many must die before the gospel can reach their ears. What mighty multitudes will be laid in their sepulchres, without hope, before they can hear of him who is "the resurrection and the life!" Christian effort for the last thirty years, has erected only here and there a light-house on the dark coast. How many millions will close their probation in the gloom of moral midnight, without one ray of hope, before the "Light of the world" will shine upon all the earth! What a solemn, soul-thrilling motive to exertion is here? Like Moses, when the plague raged in Israel, we must fly among the dying. Oh! who can withhold any energy he can employ in such a cause, and under the pressure of such a motive?

2. I only add, dear reader, that *the swiftness of your own progress toward eternity*, demands that you do with your might whatsoever your hands find to do. The tide that bears the heathen toward eternity, bears you also on its bosom. Your probationary hours are as swift winged as theirs. If you would share in the honor and happiness of this work, you have no time to lose.

The stroke of death will soon glaze your eye—hush your voice of prayer—and strip you of every means you might employ in behalf of the heathen. Your shroud may be even already woven! How solemn and earnest is the cry in your ears, “what thou doest, do quickly!” “For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.”

Reader, the perusal of this little volume does not leave you where you have been, in respect to your responsibilities. A subject of momentous interest has been presented before you. The ignorance, guilt, and miseries of the largest portion of your race, have been depicted. Your duty in regard to them has been plainly, affectionately, and solemnly urged. The responsibility of the decision, how you will act, is now left with your own conscience. If you will engage in the blessed work of the world's conversion, with a heart warmed with holy love; if to your dying day, your energies shall be thus employed, you shall have—the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it—you shall have a portion with those, who, having turned many to righteousness, “shall shine as the stars forever and ever.”

But if you turn away, if you will not heed the cry of the perishing, and will have no pity on the heathen, the writer bids you farewell, uttering this language of God in your ears, "IF THOU FORBEAR TO DELIVER THEM THAT ARE DRAWN UNTO DEATH, AND THOSE THAT ARE READY TO BE SLAIN; IF THOU SAYEST, BEHOLD WE KNEW IT NOT; DOTH NOT HE THAT PONDERETH THE HEART CONSIDER IT? AND HE THAT KEEPETH THY SOUL, DOTH NOT HE KNOW IT? AND SHALL NOT HE RENDER TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS WORKS!" Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.

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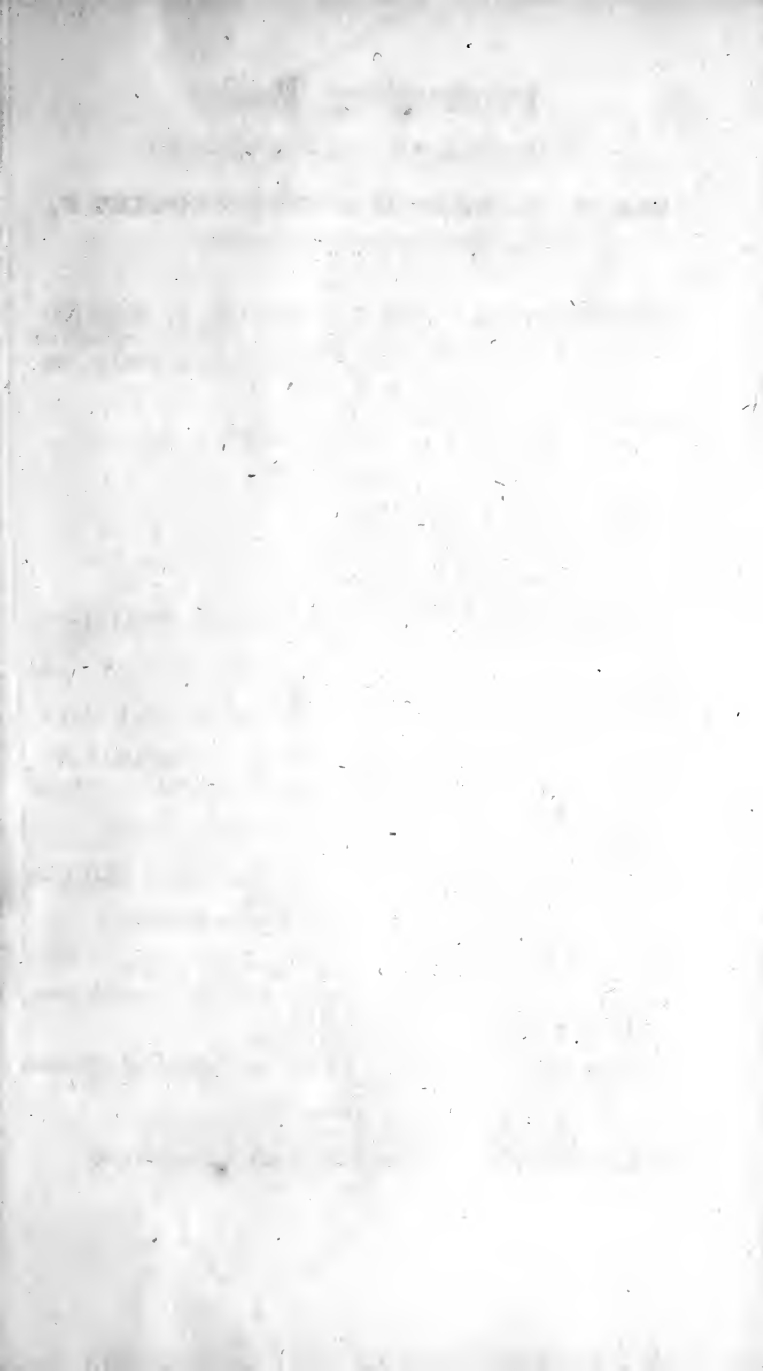
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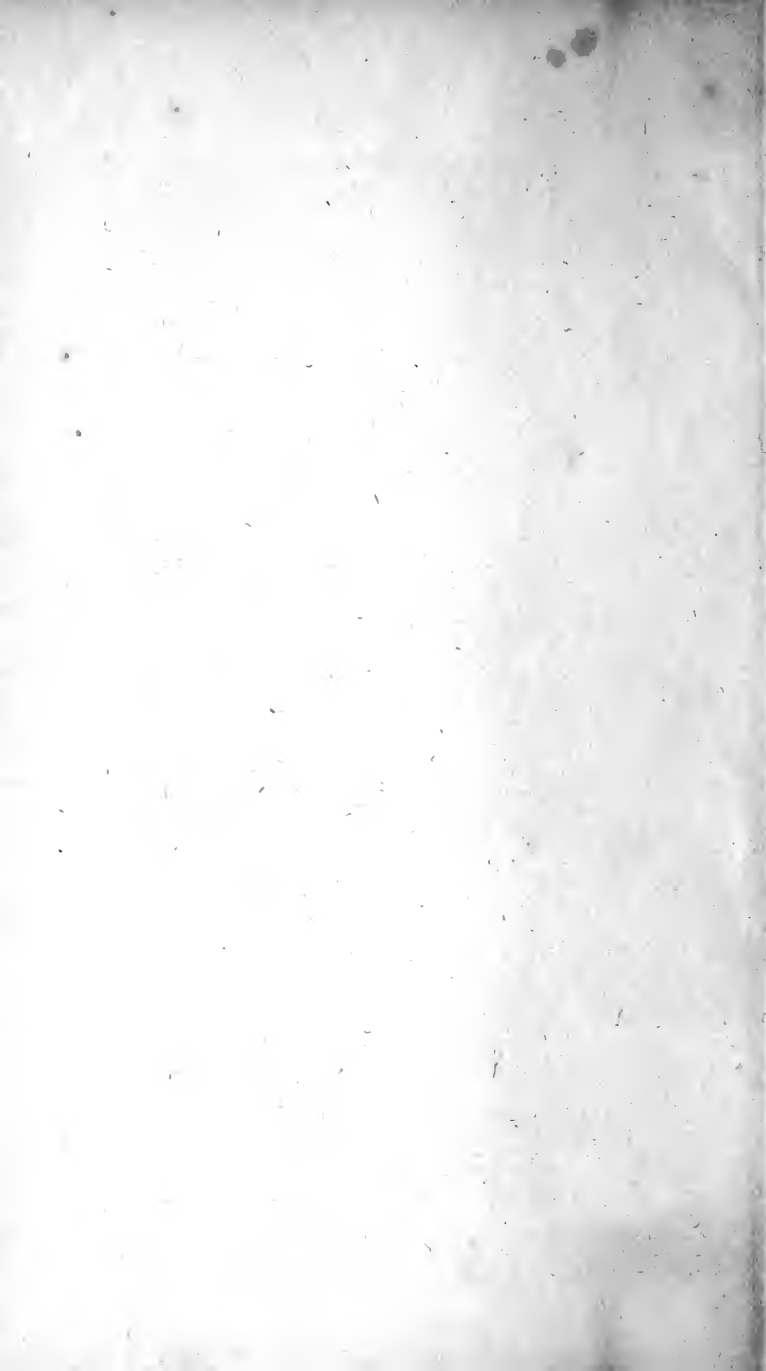
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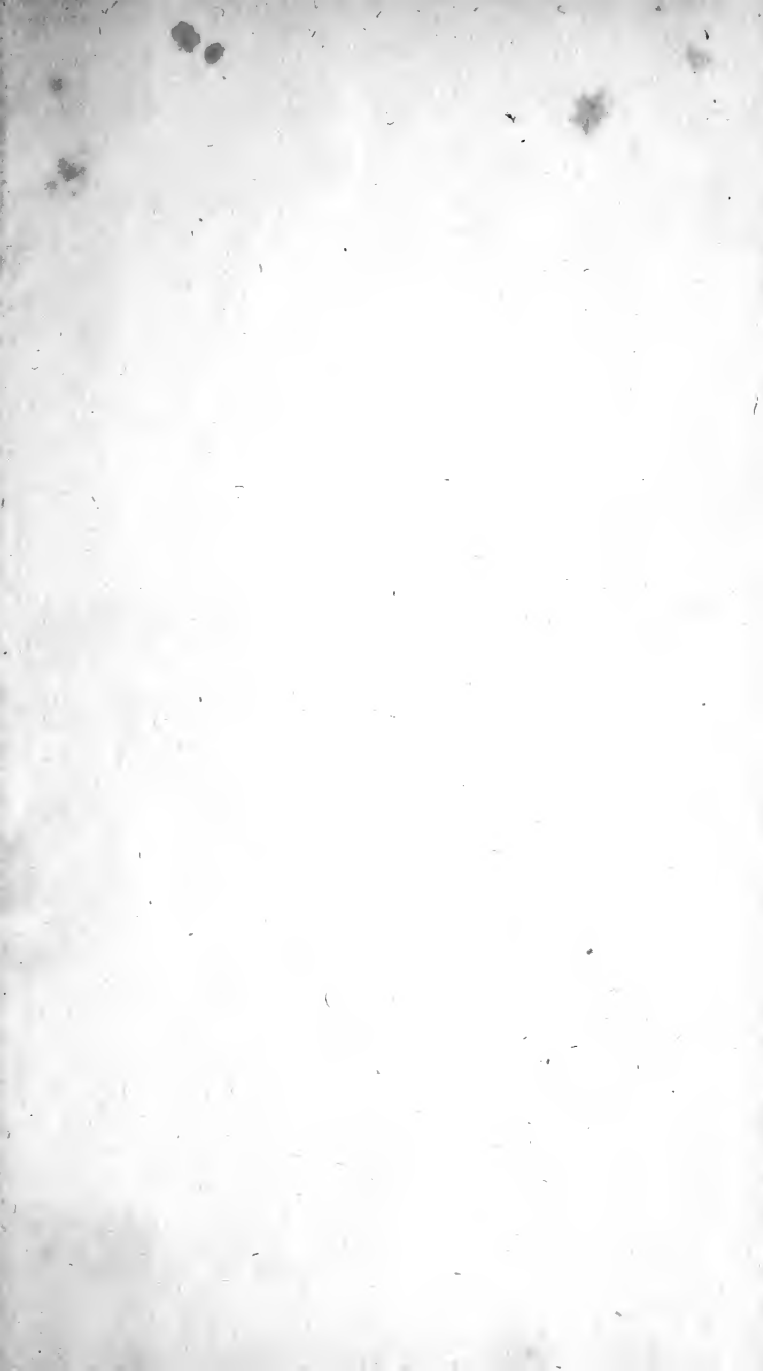
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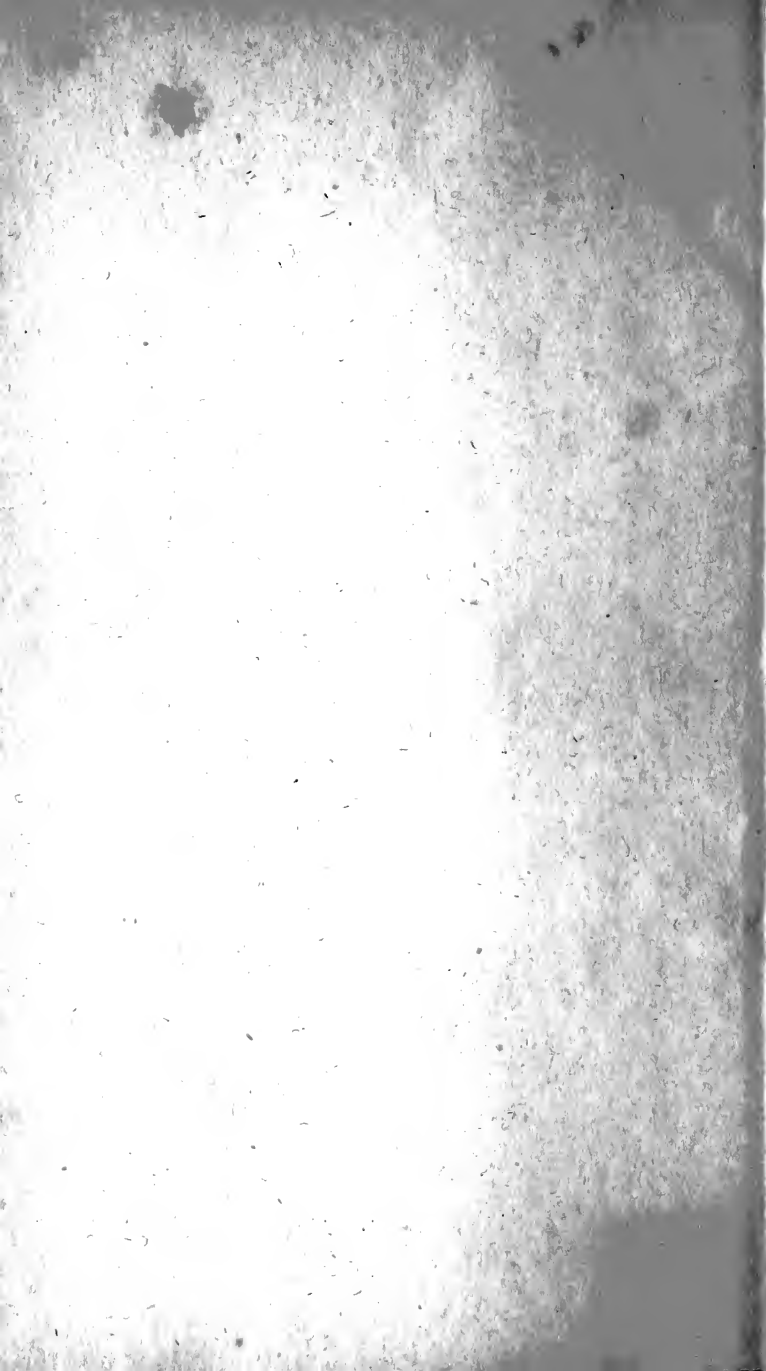
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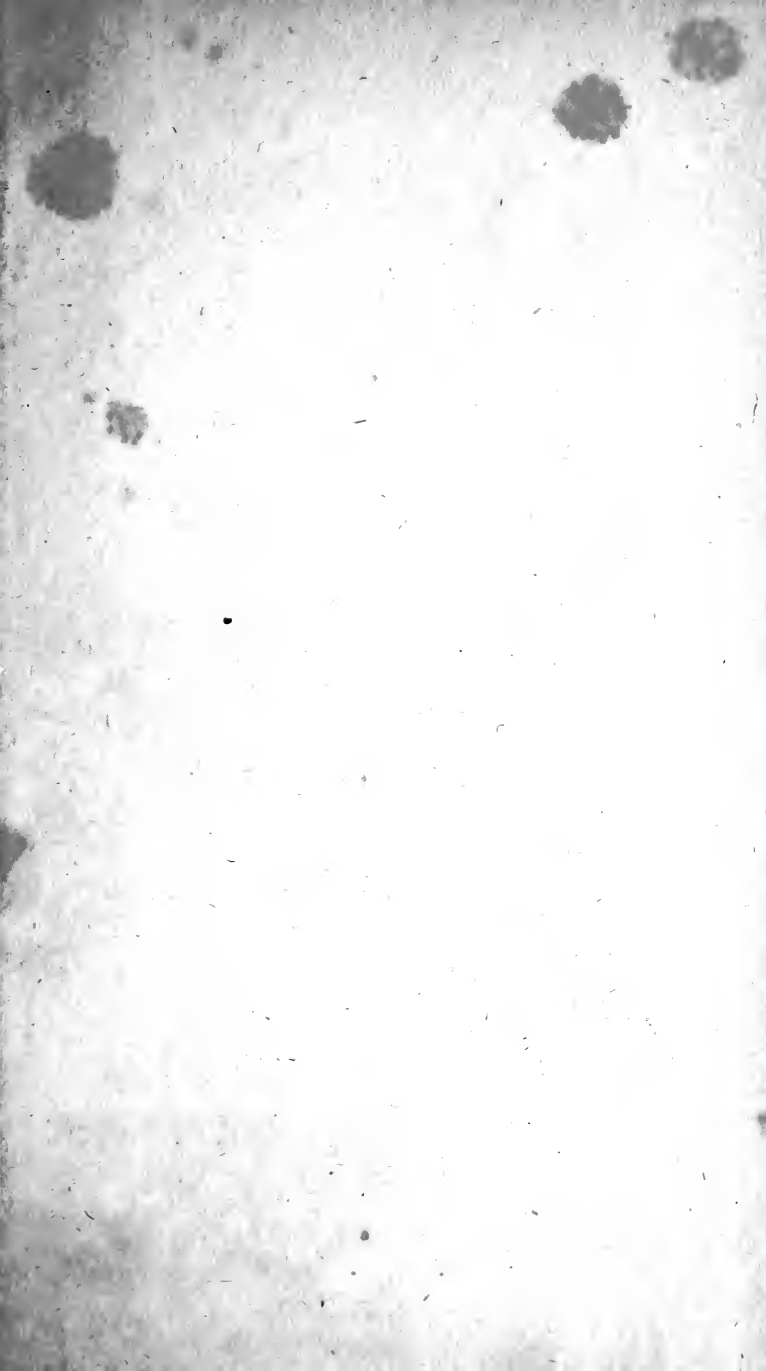












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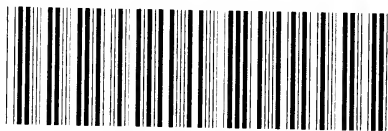
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